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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-092 *10 May 1996*

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 3 May

NC0905101696

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 3 May edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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2. Victims of "Qanacaust" Buried.
3. Analyst Views U.S.-Israeli Agreement.
4. Secret Annexes to Turkish-Israeli Accord Reported.
5. Writer Comments on Resistance Victory, Israeli Fright.
6. U.S. Counterterrorism Law Viewed.
7. Columnist Criticizes Arab Submission to Great Satan.

ISLAMIC GROUP PROPOSES INITIATIVE TO END VIOLENCE

Dawud Hasan writes a 400-word report on page 1 on an initiative by the Islamic Group to end violence.

VICTIMS OF "QANACAUST" BURIED

Qasim Qasir writes an approximately 700-word report on page 1 from Southern Lebanon on the funeral of the "massacred" at the village of Qana on 18 April. He refers to the massacre as "Qanacaust," a name modeled after the holocaust, a reference to the massacres "which the Zionists claim were committed against them by the Germans," he adds. The funeral and the burial ceremony of the victims turned into a massive and public demonstration against Israel, in which representatives of the various Lebanese sects participated. The writer notes that the "Qanacaust massacre will remain a historic landmark proving the Zionists' hatred of everything Arab or Islamic."

ANALYST VIEWS U.S.-ISRAELI AGREEMENT

The recently signed "strategic agreement" between the United States and Israel is viewed by a "prominent Egyptian military and political analyst and expert" on page 1. In an approximately 500-word report by 'Amr Salman on page 1, the expert, who asked for anonymity, begins by noting that the agreement proves that the "dirty war launched by Israel against Lebanon had the full approval of the United States." The expert, who the writer noted had occupied "sensitive" positions in the past, points out that the Israeli "massacre" in Lebanon sought to serve both U.S. and Israeli elections. Explaining, the unidentified analyst points out that U.S. President Clinton "needs the money and backing of the Jews, who control the financial and official institutions in the United States, while Peres wants to prove to the Israeli people that he can be as extremist as the Likud, if necessary." Noting that the Israelis were rewarded by the United States for their services, the analyst affirms that Israel obtained many gains from Clinton, although only the "Nautilus" system for intercepting Katyushas and similar rockets was mentioned. The expert adds that although U.S. laws prohibits the export of any new weapons to any country, even NATO countries, before two years of use in the U.S. military service, Israel has been permitted to gain access to this system in violation of U.S. law. Under the agreement, the expert adds, the United States will pay 90 percent of the cost of developing the "Arrow" missile. Concluding, the expert notes that usually in such deals the declared clauses of this agreement are less than the "secret clauses", which remain unknown for political considerations.

SECRET ANNEXES TO TURKISH-ISRAELI ACCORD REPORTED

Mahmud Bakri writes an approximately 700-word report on pages 1 and 8 on the military agreement recently signed between Israel and Turkey. The writer points out that Israel signed the agreement, which included "many secret annexes", to gain access to the technology available to other NATO members to help it develop its air defense mechanism, with particular emphasis on four types of missiles, including Jericho-1 and Jericho-2. In return, Turkey will obtain some types of Israeli missiles as well as research and plans on them. Citing unnamed sources, the report points out that Turkish territory may be used for military purposes by Israel, something that the sources believe refers to plans to extend the range of the Israeli missiles as much as possible to be able to reach "Arab targets in any region." The writer refers to information that a "parallel and secret agreement" was signed between the Israeli and Turkish intelligence services that will go into effect as of 1 June. One of the main clauses in this agreement, Bakri adds, is the joint cooperation in the field of "spy satellites" with a view to accurately monitoring the "movement" of Arab armies.

WRITER COMMENTS ON RESISTANCE VICTORY, ISRAELI FRIGHT

Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn writes an approximately 5,000-word article on page 5. In his article, Husayn views the cease-fire agreement in Lebanon, the U.S.-Israeli pact, and threats against Syria and Iran. He begins by noting that Israel failed to obtain any gains from the cease-fire understanding to relieve it of the "fright" it experienced for two weeks. In view of this, the Israeli leadership "found itself compelled to accept a document in which it acknowledged the

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legitimacy of armed resistance against its occupation", which was a "victory" for the Arabs and Muslims, he adds. He notes that Israel's continuous bombardment has failed to weaken Hizballah, which was backed by the Lebanese people and the courageous negotiating stand taken by the Lebanese and Syrian leadership. Husayn notes that this "gradual change in the balance of power in our favor" has frightened the U.S.-Israeli alliance. He adds: "To further humiliate the arrogant, the U.S.-Zionist alliance was compelled to accept the involvement of France (Europe) in the negotiations and in supervising the implementation of the agreement. This new principle; that is, Europe's entry in the Arab-Israeli conflict, is a bad omen which the U.S.-Zionist alliance has sought for two decades to avoid so that we may remain under their exclusive domain." Husayn notes that Egypt was deliberately kept out of the picture and not given any mediation role, a fact which he explains was intended by the "U.S.-Zionist alliance" to keep Egypt marginalized and without influence.

Turning to the pact signed between Israel and the United States, Husayn sees nothing new to reassure the Israelis in this agreement, adding that a similar agreement was signed in 1969. Husayn downplays the significance of plans to develop missiles to intercept Katyushas, included in the agreement, adding that the Americans themselves dismiss these plans as not feasible. He explains that the "nightmares haunting Israel" are primarily represented by the missiles available to Arab and Islamic states, particularly Syria and Iran. Although they are small in number and carry chemical not nuclear heads, he adds, these missiles are enough to "neutralize" the effect of the Israeli "atomic bombs and warheads." Husayn refers to a clause in the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance stipulating that "U.S. soldiers will come to the rescue of Israel if it comes under aggression." Noting that this clause will not remove the fright from the "hearts of Zionists", Husayn points out that this clause has very serious significance. Explaining, he adds: "The Israeli army has never before asked foreign troops to intervene to protect it." He points out that their public declaration that they accept the intervention of the U.S. army to help them means that they are experiencing a "fright" never seen since the establishment of Israel. This, however, does not mean that the final victory will come soon, but that we are slowly adjusting the balance in our favor, he adds.

Husayn refers to the U.S. planes that have arrived in Jordan, the U.S. "buildup" in the Gulf, and the Israeli-Turkish arrangements. He points out that these activities threaten Iraq, but they also threaten Syria and Iran. He notes that this activity is part of the "war of nerves" to stop the two countries from "supporting terrorism"; that is, supporting armed resistance in Palestine and Lebanon. He adds: "This is not mere bluffing; there is a real intention to hit the two states if the satanic alliance manages to set the regional and international stage and if America and Israel secure themselves against possible retaliatory responses." Husayn argues that although Iran's possible acquisition of nuclear weapons constitutes a "real nightmare" for the U.S.-Zionist alliance, he expresses his belief that Syria, and not Iran, may be the first likely "target" of the offensive, first because of the greater threat represented by its missiles and second because the Syrian leadership has become the most "obstinate" regional political force and the most influential in aborting the "schemes of capitulation" which the enemies seek to impose.

U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM LAW VIEWED

An unattributed article on page 7 entitled "The U.S. Terrorism Law" notes that U.S. President Bill Clinton last week signed the U.S. counterterrorism law, after substantial amendments were introduced to it. At the signing ceremony, President Clinton emphasized that the law authorizes the "expulsion of foreigners who dare come to America to back up terrorist actions." It also bars terrorists from collecting funds in the United States to spend on their "horrendous crimes", the article adds. The article notes that Islamic organizations working in the United States have been subjected to an "arbitrary campaign", allegedly for their support of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad organizations. The article notes that the law includes "extremely strange" clauses, such as the right of the "federal police" to track down terrorists outside the United States. It also gives U.S citizens the right to "put on trial" before U.S. courts any foreign country on charges of terrorism. The article notes that the FBI has recently broadened its activity outside the United States, setting up approximately 23 bureaus in several countries, adding that FBI bureaus are intended to be opened in most Arab capitals, including Cairo. The article points out that although the U.S. Congress dropped from the counterterrorism bill articles that sought to prevent Americans from carrying weapons, although those that carried out the Oklahoma bombing were American, it kept the articles that give Americans the right to arrest any Arab citizen, for instance, and try him in the United States on charges of terrorism. Noting that President Clinton made a point at the ceremony of mentioning the bombing of U.S. marines in Beirut in the early eighties, the Achille Lauro hijacking, the Lockerbie incident, incidents in which Arabs and Muslims were accused, the article asks: "Will the U.S. law turn first against the Arabs and Muslims?"

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COLUMNIST CRITICIZES ARAB SUBMISSION TO GREAT SATAN

Mahmdum Bakri, in an approximately 500-word column on page 12, notes that some Arab rulers are fond of "kneeling before the United States" in the hope of winning the approval of its President Bill Clinton, who has "crowned himself king of the universe and absolute ruler of humanity in its present era." Bakri adds that it seems that the "white master" has realized the nature of the Arab rulers and the fact that they will proceed with their "reckless" policies in disregard of the cries of their people. Bakri points out that after his "unlimited bias in favor of the Israeli aggression on Lebanon", "this hateful master" wanted to insult these rulers. For that purpose, he attended a meeting of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, the biggest Jewish lobby in the United States. During the ceremony, President Clinton "enumerated the merits" of Shim'on Peres and reaffirmed that "beloved Israel" will continue to be supplied with money and weapons to remain superior to other countries in the region. Concluding, Bakri writes: This is Clinton, the "great Satan incarnate." He asks: Will our rulers heed the lesson?

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Resumes Meetings; 4 Reports Debated

JN0905152896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 9 May 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Rafah]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Legislative Council is continuing its meetings at the Rafah Municipality Public Library. Its evening session began a short while ago.

The council members will finalize discussions on the remaining reports submitted by the specialized committees. The council discussed the reports of four committees in its morning session. These were: The Economic Committee's report which received much deliberation; the natural resources' report; the Interior and Security Committee's report; and the report of the General Supervision and Human Rights Committee, but the recommendations regarding this report will be discussed at the coming session.

The council also condemned the Israeli military sieged imposed on Palestinian territories.

During the evening session, President Yasir 'Arafat will most likely submit the new cabinet to the council. He said yesterday that he had not concluded his consultations. President 'Arafat asserted that he will announce the new cabinet today if he concludes his consultations. It is noteworthy that after the morning session, the council members paid a field visit to the lands threatened with confiscation near the settlement of (Miraj) in Rafah.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Announces Names of New Cabinet Members

JN0905211296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1700 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat this evening announced the formation of the new cabinet. The cabinet is made up of the following: Ilyas Frayj, Hasan Tahbub, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Mrs. Intisar al-Wazir, Mahir al-Masri, Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Furayh Abu-Middayn, Dr. Riyad al-Za'nun, Jamil al-Tarifi, Bashir al-Barghuthi, 'Ali al-Qawasimi, Abu-'Ali Shahin, 'Abd-al-Rahman Hamad, 'Imad al-Faluji, 'Azzam al-Ahmad, and 'Abd-al-Jawad Salih.

The new cabinet also comprises the following PLO Executive Committee members: Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, Yasir 'Amr, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Dr. Samir Ghawshah, and Faysal al-Husayni.

President Yasir 'Arafat said that those to be proposed by the Executive Committee will also be added to the new cabinet.

The following will also be added to the cabinet: 1. Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Presidency, with the rank of minister. 2. Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman, prime ministry secretary general, with the rank of minister. 3. 'Abdallah Hurani, adviser for refugees affairs, with the rank of minister. 4. Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Hajj Ahmad, adviser to the Health Ministry, with the rank of minister. 5. Dr. 'Abd-al-Hafiz al-Ashhab, adviser, with the rank of minister.

The Legislative Council approved this configuration at the end of its fourth session in Rafah and which ended one hour ago.

Palestinian Affairs: Radio Reports New Palestinian Cabinet

JN0905205096 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 9 May 96

[From the "Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following two-days of heated debate in the Palestinian Legislative Council which met in Rafah, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat this evening announced the birth of a new Palestinian cabinet. Colleague Basim Abu-Sumayyah will tell us about its configuration and the new faces in it.

[Begin Abu-Sumayyah recording] There are nine new ministers out of the 21 which form the new Palestinian

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cabinet, whose portfolios have not been specified, as yet. Thirteen ministers are from the Fatah Movement, and they represent approximately one-third of the cabinet.

The new ministers are Faysal al-Husayni from Jerusalem; 'Abd-al-Jawad Salih from Ramallah, a former PLO Executive Committee member; Bashir al-Barghuthi, former Palestinian People's Party secretary general; 'Abd-al-'Aziz Shahin, one of the Fatah Movement's prominent leaders in the Gaza Strip: Mahir al-Masri, a Nabulus businessman; 'Azzam al-Ahmad, Palestinian ambassador to Iraq; 'Imad al-Faluji, former leader in the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas and Legislative Council member; 'Abd-al-Rahman Hamad, university lecturer from Gaza; and 'Ali al-Qawasimi, former president of the Pharmacists Union in the West Bank.

Twelve ministers from the previous government kept their portfolios such as Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Ilyas Frayj, Intisar al-Wazir, Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Jamil al-Tarifi, and Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh.

'Abdallah Hurani, who lost his membership in the PLO Executive Committee, was appointed as adviser for refugees affairs with the rank of minister. Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman, former official PLO spokesman was appointed as the Prime Ministry's secretary general. Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim kept his position as secretary general of the Palestinian Authority presidency with the rank of minister. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Authority Rejects 'Wrong' U.S. Decision on Abu-Marzuq

JN0905124996 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian National Authority [PNA] today rejected the U.S. judge's decision to extradite Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] Political Bureau, to Israel. Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi said: The U.S. decision is wrong. We in the PNA are against this decision.

A U.S. federal judge in New York agreed yesterday to Israel's request to extradite Abu-Marzuq, who has been detained in the United States since September 1995.

Palestinian Affairs: Officials Criticize U.S. Court Ruling on Abu-Marzuq

TA0905134696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Furayh Abu-Middayn, the Palestinian Authority's [PA] official in charge of the legal system, has criticized a U.S. court ruling that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] member Musa Abu-Marzuq can be extradited to Israel. Abu-Middayn said that Abu-Marzuq's extradition to Israel will lead to an increase of violence in the region.

'Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu-Rudaynah said that if the United States decides to extradite Abu-Marzuq it should extradite him to the PA, not to Israel.

Palestinian Affairs: Islamic Jihad—U.S. Ruling on Abu-Marzuq 'Hostile' Step

JN0905154996 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine today said that the U.S. court ruling on extraditing Musa Abu- Marzuq, official in the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, is a hostile U.S. step. It also called for boycotting the United States.

A U.S. federal court yesterday permitted the extradition of Abu-Marzuq to Israel, which accuses him of masterminding 10 operations against Israeli interests.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Condemns U.S. 'Conspiracy' Against Abu-Marzuq

JN0905154596 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Caving in to Zionist pressures, a federal judge in New York yesterday allowed the extradition to the Zionist entity of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Political Office of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. The defense lawyer announced that he will appeal the ruling of the U.S. judiciary, noting that he can appeal the ruling within 30 days.

The United States arrested Abu-Marzuq at John Kennedy Airport in New York on 25 July, upon his return to the United States, where he has legally resided for 14 years. The United States asked its nationals abroad to be on the alert following the issuance of the unfair ruling on the extradition of Dr. Abu-Marzuq to the Zionist entity.

Commenting on this ruling, official spokesman for the Hamas Movement said: The U.S. judge sent his ruling approving the extradition of Dr. Abu-Marzuq to the

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Zionists directly to the defense lawyer, outside the court hearing and without giving the defense the opportunity to express its view during the hearing.

This step consecrates the obvious collusion between the U.S. judiciary and administration to extradite Dr. Abu-Marzuq to the Zionist entity, at this time in particular. The ruling comes three weeks ahead of the Zionist elections to help terrorist Peres and his party win the elections. This step is one of the bitter fruits of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference and comes in the aftermath of the Zionist-U.S. aggression against Lebanon and Qana massacre.

The spokesman went on to say: The Hamas Movement strongly condemns this U.S. conspiracy against the Palestinian people and the process of legitimate resistance against the Zionist occupation. This step will spark the fury of the Palestinian people and Arab and Islamic nation, who will not hesitate to face up to this conspiracy with condemnation and confrontation everywhere to halt the extradition and secure the immediate release on mujahid Abu-Marzuq.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Official Views U.S. Decision To Extradite Abu-Marzuq

NC0905192496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 9 May 96

[Telephone interview with Mustafa al-Liddawi, Hamas representative in Beirut, in Beirut, by Mahdi Hasan in Tehran; from the "News and Reports" program; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Mustafa al-Liddawi, how does Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] view the U.S. court ruling to extradite Musa Abu-Marzuq to the Zionist enemy?

[Al-Liddawi] In the fist place, we do not think the U.S. judiciary system is fair. It is a politicized system that takes orders from the U.S. Administration, with President Bill Clinton at its head. The recent ruling by a federal American judge to extradite Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq to the government of the Zionist enemy was made at this particular time to serve the government of Shim'on Peres. The United States is doing everything in its capacity to improve Peres' chances of winning the elections. It is on this basis that the United States arranged the Sharm al-Shaykh summit and concluded high-level security agreements with Shim'on Peres' government. It is also on this basis that the United States is now approving the extradition of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq to Israel; it is an obvious attempt to improve Peres' election prospects. Regrettably, the U.S. Administration is trying to use this issue — originally a political issue concerning the affairs, future, and fate of the Palestinian people — to serve the interests of a man who will work to return the favor to Bill Clinton in the upcoming U.S. election. So we believe this U.S. judiciary is unfair but we still appeal to it to view this case fairly. Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq is not charged with any terrorist act. He is a struggler for his cause and his country. He is engaged in a legitimate political action to serve the Palestinian cause. His arrest was basically a political arrest to serve Israeli interests.

[Hasan] Did the American judiciary have legal evidence to support the ruling it made?

[Al-Liddawi] Since his arrest on 25 July, there has been no single piece of evidence to condemn Abu-Marzuq or justify his arrest by the U.S. authorities. He was living in the United States for 14 years. He received his higher education there and some of his children have American nationality. He had permanent residence there, the so-called green card. He was not involved in any financial or legal violation. He visited the United States often. But this time the U.S. Administration arrested him based on Israeli papers and documents; Israel asked the United States to arrest him. We do not think there is evidence to justify the arrest of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq or his extradition to the enemy government. So, as I said, we still appeal to and call on this country, which has always preached human rights and justice, to apply justice this time on its own territory, not to divide justice and use it to serve its purposes. There is nothing against the law in Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq's file. He is a political struggler with liberal ideas for his Palestinian cause.

[Hasan] How do you evaluate the position of ordinary Palestinians on this ruling? Have the Palestinian masses reacted to the decision?

[Al-Liddawi] We directly appealed against the ruling. We still consider the ruling to be incomplete, not final. I do not think the Palestinian people or the Arab and Islamic nation will remain silent the moment the ruling to extradite Abu-Marzuq to the enemy government becomes final. The U.S. Administration's decision provokes the sentiments of Arabs and Muslims everywhere, because they see that just causes are being betrayed by the pursuit of individuals. We do not think that pursuing and extraditing Dr. Musa will pass unnoticed by Arabs and Muslims worldwide.

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Palestinian Affairs: Paper Publishes 'Draft' Palestinian Constitution

JN0905113296 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 8 May 96 p 5

[Draft Palestinian Constitution "exclusively" published by AL-BILAD; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text]

Draft Constitution of the Republic of Palestine

Preamble

We the people of Palestine, aware of the sacred right of peoples to self-determination — the right provided for by the UN Charter which officially reconfirms its support for man's rights and liberties as defined in 1789 and as recorded and confirmed by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948 — emphasize that the boundaries of the state of Palestine are as stipulated by the 29 November 1947 UN General Assembly Resolution 181, and based on 11 December 1948 UN General Assembly Resolution 194, and 22 November 1967 UN Security Council Resolution 242. The Palestinian people also emphasize that Palestine is part and parcel of the Arab homeland and the Palestinian people part of the Arab nation. We stress our determination to support and protect the independence of the Palestinian homeland and the right of its people to freedom under a democratic regime based on sovereignty of the people and equality among all the people in terms of rights and duties. We also emphasize our cooperation with all peoples in support of freedom, justice, and peace throughout the world, particularly with the peoples with which we share ties of history, religion, culture, and political orientation in the interest of a better future. We the people of Palestine will set up an integral, independent, sovereign republic, with the Palestinian National Charter constituting an integral part of this Constitution. With this Constitution, we are laying out the legal and social democratic order of the Palestinian homeland.

Chapter 1 on Republic and Sovereignty

Article 1 — The Republic of Palestine is an indivisible social democratic entity.

The Republic of Palestine assures all its citizens equality before the law without discrimination on grounds of origin, sex, or religion, and it emphasizes respect for all faiths.

The national symbol is the flag which is made according to the following measurements: Its length is double its width and it is divided horizontally into three equal and parallel parts, the top one green, the middle white, and the bottom black. On the mast end of the flag there is a red right-angled triangle, the base of which is the same length as the width of the flag and the height of which is half its length.

The Republic's slogan is: Unity-Action-Justice.

The Republic's principle is: A government of the people, for the people, by the people.

Article 2 — Islam is the religion of the state, and Arabic its official language.

The capital of the Republic of Palestine is Jerusalem; only a referendum may change that status.

Article 3 — National sovereignty stems from the people who exercise it directly through election and referendum or indirectly through organizations invested with legislative, executive, and judicial powers. No section of the people or any individual may exercise sovereignty.

Balloting is general, equal, and secret. It may be direct or indirect in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution or the law.

Those who have the right to vote are all the subjects of both sexes of the Republic of Palestine who have reached the age of 18 and who enjoy their civic and political rights.

The right to vote and other rights may be enjoyed by foreigners residing in the Republic of Palestine within the terms and in the cases defined by the law.

The Supreme Court will supervise the legality of the referendum and declare its results.

Article 4 — Political parties and groups are some of the mediums of expressing the popular opinion through elections. These parties and organizations are formed and they exercise their activities freely within the bounds of the existing laws and regulations. The political parties and organizations must respect democratic principles, national sovereignty, and public order.

Article 5 — The Republic of Palestine is organized on the basis of the separation of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers.

Chapter 2 on the President of the Republic and Head of Government

Article 6 — The president of the republic is head of state, and represents the national unity and respects the Constitution and ensures the smooth running of public authorities and state functions.

The president of the republic is the guarantor of national sovereignty and the Republic's territorial integrity and respect for agreements and treaties.

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He defines and directs the nation's general policies.

He is the absolute holder of executive powers.

Article 7 — The president of the Republic is elected for a seven-year term through direct public balloting, and he may stand for reelection.

The president of the republic is elected by absolute majority in the first round, and if he fails to win that majority, he is elected through proportional majority in the runoff that must be held 15 days after the first round.

The electorate is called to vote in accordance with a decree issued by the Council of Ministers.

The elections are held 20 days at the earliest and 50 days at the latest before the expiry of the president's term.

The rules and provisions of election and standing for election, the balloting process, vote counting, and announcement of results are defined by the law.

The legality of all these measures is supervised by the Supreme Court.

Article 8 — The president of the republic is assisted by vice presidents, who are named by him and who exercise the powers assigned to them by him.

Article 9 — In case the president of the republic delegates his duties to one of his vice presidents, or in case of his temporary absence, one of them takes charge of his responsibilities with the exception of the authorities stated in Articles 16, 17, and 19.

Article 10 — In the event of the president's office becoming definitively vacant for any cause advanced by the Supreme Court upon the request of the government or the speaker of the Legislative Council, the president will be temporarily replaced by one of the vice presidents pending the election of a new president through general direct elections provided that polling takes place three months at the latest from the date of the office becoming vacant.

Article 11 — When the president of the republic takes office, he is sworn in before the Legislative Council with the following oath:

"I swear by almighty God to devote myself to the realization of the well-being of the people of the Republic of Palestine in the interest of boosting their welfare and protecting them against all harm and to respect the Constitution and defend it and safeguard the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Palestine and fulfill the duties required by my office and to be fair to all."

Article 12 — The president of the republic issues laws within the 15 days period that follows the notification of the laws that have received final approval. This period is cut to five days in emergencies defined by the Legislative Council.

In the period before a law is issued, the president may request a revision of parts of the text of the law, and the revision request may not be rejected.

Should a text that has been presented for further debate be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the Legislative Council — whether in its original or amended form — it will be issued by the president of the republic within the time frame defined above.

If the president of the republic does not issue the law in accordance with the above-mentioned terms and deadlines, the law will be issued by the speaker of the Legislative Council.

Article 13 — The president of the republic sees to the implementation of the laws and judicial verdicts.

He has the authority of issuing regulations.

He signs the presidential orders and decrees.

All the decisions of the president of the republic excluding those provided for in Articles 8, 16, 17, 19, 21, 32, 34, 46, and 53, must be signed by the ministers concerned as well as the president himself.

Article 14 — The ambassadors and plenipotentiary envoys of the state in other countries will be accredited by the president, as will the ambassadors and plenipotentiary envoys of foreign countries.

Article 15 — The president enjoys the prerogative of granting amnesty in accordance with the terms stipulated by law.

Article 16 — The president, after sounding out the opinion of the Council of Ministers and the Legislative Council Bureau's Committee, may put to a referendum any question that he deems calls for going to the people directly.

If the outcome of the referendum is a yes vote, the president issues it as law in accordance with provisions of the above-mentioned article.

Article 17 — If it proves necessary, the president may, after consulting with the Council of Ministers and the speaker of the Legislative Council, dissolve the latter. Alternately, he may extend the term of the Legislative Council by no more than 18 months.

In the event of its dissolution before the scheduled date, elections must be held for a new Legislative Council

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within 20 days at the earliest and 40 days at the latest from the date of the dissolution.

The electorate is called to the vote in accordance with a decree issued by the Council of Ministers

Article 18 — If the need arises, the president of the republic may declare a state of emergency or a state of alert under which he enjoys exceptional powers as stipulated by terms defined by law.

Article 19 — If the republic's institutions or independence, the supreme interests of the nation or its territorial integrity, or the implementation of the country's international commitments should come under imminent danger, or if there is a disruption of the operation of the public authorities, the president of the republic will take such measures as are required under such circumstances, after obtaining the Legislative Council's approval.

He will communicate these measures to the nation through a special announcement.

Article 20 — The president of the republic is head of the civil and military services.

He has authority over all the general forces.

He makes the appointments for state civil and military positions.

Top state positions held by a decree issued by the Council of Ministers are defined by the law, and so are the conditions that must be met in the event the president delegates his powers regarding appointments made in his name.

Article 21 — The president of the republic is the head of government; he names its members and defines their duties; the government members are accountable to the president of the republic.

He dismisses ministers from their posts in accordance with a decree issued by the Council of Ministers.

A minister must be at least 25 years of age, enjoying civic and political rights.

The government members are chosen from the Legislative Council and from outside.

They are responsible by law for the crimes and misdemeanors they may commit in the line of duty.

The number of the government members and their activities that clash with their positions as well as their financial compensation are defined by the law.

Article 22 — The president of the republic will chair cabinet sessions.

He will see that minutes of the sessions are taken and filed.

With the exception of the cases expressly provided for in the rest of the articles of this Constitution, following are the Council of Ministers areas of responsibility: — The decisions pertinent to the republic's general policies. — Agreements with other countries. — Draft laws and motions. — Presidential orders and regulation decrees. — The declaration of a state of emergency and martial law.

Article 23 — The opinion of the Supreme Court may be sought before draft laws, presidential orders, and statutes are presented to the Council of Ministers.

Article 24 — The president of the republic may delegate his responsibilities to government members with the exception of those specified in Articles 16, 17, and 19.

Article 25 — The president of the republic communicates with the Legislative Council either directly or through statements read there.

The Legislative Council may debate these statements.

The Legislative Council may hold special meetings for this purpose outside of the term of the regular sitting.

Chapter 3 on the Legislative Council

Article 26 — The parliament of the Republic of Palestine is made up of one chamber called the Legislative Council.

The Legislative Council members bear the title of deputies who are elected for a term of four years by public direct balloting.

The Legislative Council adopts laws and legislates taxes and scrutinizes the work of the government as provided by relevant articles in the Constitution.

Article 27 — The number of the deputies, the terms of their election, the invalidation of an election result, the clash of interests, and the deputies' financial compensation are defined by the law.

No one may be legally barred from assuming or exercising their parliamentary functions.

Article 28 — The Legislative Council will decide on the validity of the election of its members. In case a result is in dispute, the matter is referred to the Supreme Court by the candidate concerned to decide on the correctness and legality of his election.

Article 29 — No deputy may be sued, arrested, imprisoned, or taken to court on account of his opinion or votes as he engages in his duties.

During a term of the Legislative Council, no deputy may be sued or arrested for a crime of misdemeanor without obtaining the Legislative Council's clearance.

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Outside of a parliamentary term, no deputy may be arrested without first obtaining permission from the Legislative Council Bureau's Committee, with the exception of cases where he is caught red handed, or when legal action is permitted, or when there is a definitive verdict.

The proceedings of imprisonment and legal action against a deputy are stopped if this is demanded by the Legislative Council.

Article 30 — The Legislative Council's internal rules may, on an exceptional basis and in special cases, grant an authorization to vote on behalf of a deputy. No deputy, however, may be permitted more than one such authorization.

Article 31 — The Legislative Council convenes by law on the first day following the 15th day from the date of its election, unless it happens to fall on an official holiday, in which case it is postponed to the next day. In addition to the urgent matters put forward by the president of the republic, its agenda only includes the election of the speaker of the Legislative Council and members of the latter's bureau committee.

The Legislative Council's speaker and members of his bureau's committee are elected for a two-year term.

Article 32 — The Legislative Council convenes by law for two ordinary sittings a year.

The first sitting commences on the first Tuesday of April for a period not exceeding 100 days. The second sitting commences on the first Tuesday of October and ends on the third Friday of December at the latest.

The opening of the sitting is postponed to the day following the set day if it happens to fall on an official holiday.

The ordinary sittings are concluded by a decree from the president of the republic which he issues after he sounds the opinion of the Legislative Council Bureau's Committee.

Article 33 — The Legislative Council convenes by law during martial law, and may not be dissolved in the meantime.

Article 34 — The Legislative Council convenes extraordinary sessions in response to a call by its speaker or the president of the republic or half of the Council's membership to consider a fixed agenda. When the agenda is completed, or 15 days after the day of its opening, the president of the republic declares the extraordinary sitting closed by a decree. The president of the republic alone has the right to call a new sitting before the expiry of one month from the date of recessing the preceding extraordinary sitting.

Article 35 — The Legislative Council's sessions are open. Its minutes are published in full in the official gazette.

The Legislative Council may hold secret sessions in response to a request by the president of the republic or a third of the Council's membership.

Article 36 — The Legislative Council adopts its internal bylaws through voting; however, an internal bylaw may take effect only after being confirmed to be consistent with the Constitution with the knowledge of the Supreme Court.

Chapter 4 on Relations Between the Legislative Council and the Government

Article 37 — With the exception of the cases expressly stated by the rest of the Constitution's articles, the following matters fall within the competence of the law: — The citizenry's exercise of their rights and duties. — Restrictions placed on the subjects of the Republic of Palestine as individuals or on their money in the public interest, especially in matters of national defense. — Citizenship and cases of personal capacities, civil affairs, marriage, inheritance, and donations. — Regularization of civil affairs. — The electoral system of the Legislative Council and town halls. — Judicial organizations and the establishment of new judicial bodies and the regularization of judges' affairs. — Organization of ministerial departments and agencies, and public state positions. — Defining crimes and misdemeanors and their respective penalties, legal procedures, and the prisons regimes and parole. — The state of emergency, martial law, and the state of alert. — The system of starting companies or societies. — The tax pool, tax proportions, and means of their collection, as well as fees in all their forms and the system of money issuance. — General organization of the civil service. — Nationalization of corporations, and conversion of ownership of establishments from the public to the private sector. — Establishing or liquidating establishments and independent public utilities which are the exclusive domain of the government. — Public administrative and financial organization. — The terms governing state participation in the activity of certain companies and government supervision of their management. — The system of ownership and actual rights and civil and commercial obligations. — State loans and financial commitments. — The economic and social activity program. — The terms governing the presentation and adoption of financial law and the state final accounts.

Further to the above, the law stipulates the basic rules for the following:

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Education, the right to employment, social security, union rights including the terms governing strike action, cooperatives and savings, general organization of defense.

Under the law, the president of the republic is empowered to specify and if necessary add to the above under a decree he issues after seeking the opinion of the Supreme Court.

The president of the republic, under a decree, takes every necessary measure to implement the law.

The provisions of this article may be defined or amended under a law with the approval of the government and after seeking the opinion of the Supreme Court.

Article 38 — All the republic's revenues and expenses for each fiscal year must be assessed and recorded in the state budget.

The government must deposit the budget immediately upon the opening of the second ordinary sitting of the Legislative Council no later than 15 November. The budget is adopted under a fiscal law before the commencement of the new fiscal year. This law may include rules of a financial nature only.

If the Council is recessed at the end of the sitting devoted to the budget without the budget being adopted, the president of the republic draws up a provisional budget in accordance with presidential orders based on the preceding year's budget, the tax rates, and the fees adopted by the Legislative Council.

However, these presidential orders may, where necessary, provide for reduced expenses or increased tax and other revenues.

As per the president's request, the Legislative Council is called into session within 15 days for an extraordinary session for a further debate toward reaching an agreement between the president of the republic and the Legislative Council.

Article 39 — The Legislative Council decides on a declaration of war.

Article 40 — A state of emergency may not be extended by more than 15 days except by a decision by the Legislative Council.

Article 41 — All articles outside the competence of the law fall into the competence of the bylaws.

These articles will be handled by decrees issued by the president of the republic.

These articles may also be, in terms of application of the decrees, handled by a decision made by the ministers based on delegation by the president of the republic, or they may be made by any other authorized administrative department.

Legislative texts issued within the context of the competence of the bylaws may be amended in accordance with decrees issued by the president of the republic.

Article 42 — To promote the implementation of his program, the president of the republic may, under presidential orders and for a limited period, demand that the Legislative Council grant him the authority to take measures that usually fall within the jurisdiction of the law.

Such orders are decided upon after seeking the opinion of the Supreme Court and are enforced as soon as they are published.

At the end of the period provided for in the first paragraph of this article, the above mentioned order may not be amended except by law concerning the articles that fall within the jurisdiction of the legislature.

Article 43 — Moving legislation falls within the jurisdiction of the president of the republic and the deputies.

The deputies' draft laws will be submitted to the Legislative Council and communicated to the government for its opinion.

The government must express its opinion of these laws within a period that does not exceed the duration of the sitting that follows their submission.

In the event the government does not approve it, and if the motion is not subject to the provisions of Articles 45 and 46, the author of the motion may directly ask that the Legislative Council examine his proposed text in the course of the sitting itself.

Article 44 — Debate of the draft laws concentrates on the text moved by the government and at its own request. As for the proposed motions, their debate concentrates on the text presented by the concerned committee.

In case there is an alternative bill, debate of the text presented by the government takes precedence.

Article 45 — The deputies have the right to amend laws. Proposed laws or amendments suggested by deputies may not be accepted if their adoption may result in a shortfall in revenues or increased public burdens without their being offset by alternative revenues.

Article 46 — If it emerges during a Legislative Council's span that a motion or amendment is outside the competence of the law or is inconsistent with an authorization made under provisions of Article 42, the president of the republic or the speaker of the Legislative

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Council may raise an objection. If a dispute ensues, the matter is referred to the Supreme Court to settle the issue within eight days in response to a request by the president of the republic or the speaker of the Legislative Council. The motion or amendment remains in abeyance pending the Supreme Court's decision.

Article 47 — The government must be notified of the Legislative Council's and its committees' agenda, and the ministers have the right to attend the Council's sessions and join in their discussions, and they may request assistance from government commissioners.

Ministers and their commissioners may also attend sessions of the Legislative Council's committees which listen to them in accordance with the request of the committees, but they have no right to vote.

Article 48 — The Legislative Council's agenda includes a debate of government draft laws and proposed laws already approved by the government in accordance with a sequence and order of priorities set by the government.

Article 49 — The government or deputies may seek expedited voting on a draft law. When the government seeks such promptness, it will be granted as called for by law, but if the promptness is sought by deputies, its urgency or otherwise will be decided by the Legislative Council.

Article 50 — Ways by which the Legislative Council oversees government activities are: — The written question — The oral question and debate — Probe committees — Interrogation

One session per week is devoted for deputies questions and government answers to be dealt with in their order of priority. The terms organizing and running the probe committees shall be defined by the law.

Chapter 5 on Treaties and International Agreements

Article 51 — The president of the republic takes overall charge of international negotiations and he signs and ratifies international treaties and agreements.

Article 52 — Peace treaties, trade pacts, international agreements, treaties binding on the state finances or amending legislative provisions, and treaties related to civil affairs or to cession, exchange, or annexation of land shall not be ratified except by a law.

These treaties take effect only after having been ratified by the Legislative Council.

No cession, exchange, or annexation of land can take place without the consent of the people of Palestine who will be consulted by referendum.

Article 53 — If the Supreme Court should decide that, based on a request by the president of the republic or the speaker of the Legislative Council, an international commitment includes a provision incompatible with the Constitution, the go-ahead for its ratification may be given only after the Constitution has been amended.

Article 54 - Legally ratified treaties and agreements have a greater force than that of law on condition that the other party honors their provisions.

Chapter 6 on the Judicial Authority

Article 55 — Justice shall be administered in the territory of Palestine in the name of the people of Palestine.

Article 56 — The judicial authority is independent and in their execution of their duties, judges are subject only to the rule of law.

Confirmed judges are not subject to dismissal except within the confines of the law.

Article 57 — The president of the republic assures the independence of the judiciary.

In that he is assisted by the Supreme Council of the Judiciary headed by himself. The organization and functions of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary are defined by law.

Article 58 — No individual may be arrested arbitrarily. The accused is innocent until proven guilty in accordance with such procedures that assure him the right to self-defense.

The judicial authority, in its capacity as defender of individual freedom, guarantees respect for these principles in conformity with the terms set out in the law.

Chapter 7 on the Supreme Court

Article 59 — A supreme court is instituted and it consists of the four following chambers:

The Constitutional chamber, the judicial chamber, the administrative chamber, the audit chamber.

The functions of the Supreme Court and its four chambers as well as their makeup, organization, rules of administration and the procedures governing their operation are defined by law.

Article 60 — Verdicts of the Supreme Court shall not be challenged or appealed in any way, and are enforced on the public authorities and all administrative and judicial authorities.

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Article 61 — The Supreme Court exercises its advisory functions in the cases stated in the Constitution or in the law. The Supreme Court expresses its opinion in every draft law or decree and on every judicial or administrative matter submitted to it by the government.

The Court may, of its own volition, call the government's attention to reforms of a nature relevant to legislation or bylaws, that it judges to be compatible with the public good.

Chapter 8 on the High Court

Article 62 — A High Court is established and is composed of members elected from among the Legislative Council deputies every time a new Council is voted into office.

The law will define the terms under which the High Court is formed and run and the procedures governing its operation.

Article 63 — The High Court tries the president of the republic only in the case of high treason. It may also try government members and their associates if they are suspected of conspiring against the state.

The president of the republic or government members may stand trial before the High Court only based on the request of the Legislative Council after it has held a closed-door session and then approved the measure by at least a two-third majority vote.

For such a trial to take place, it must be proposed by at least a third of the Council's membership.

In the cases provided for in the first paragraph, the High Court defines crimes and misdemeanors and their respective penalties according to the penal code in place at the time the action lending itself to prosecution is committed.

Chapter 9 on the Economic and Social Board

Article 64 — The Economic and Social Board expresses its opinion on every matter of an economic or social nature presented to it by the government. The government also presents to the Board every plan and program draft law of a tax-related nature to express its opinion on them. Based on the request of the president of the republic or the speaker of the Legislative Council, a member of the Economic and Social Board may be named to explain the Board's opinion concerning the projects or proposals submitted to it.

Article 65 — The terms governing the formation of the Economic and Social Board, its organization, and the rules of its management are defined in the law.

Article 66 — The citizens of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as well as other countries may become members of the Economic and Social Board under the provisions of the law.

Chapter 10 on Cooperation and Participation Agreements

Article 67 — The Republic of Palestine may conclude cooperation agreements or enter into a union in all its federal and confederal shapes after holding a referendum on the issue. Alternatively, the Republic of Palestine agrees to participate with these states and international organizations for joint administration and free coordination and cooperation.

Chapter 11 on Amendment

Article 68 — The president of the republic has the right to propose a Constitutional amendment after asking the opinion of the ministers and deputies.

For an amendment proposal to be valid, it must be made by a minimum of half the Legislative Council's membership.

The amendment becomes final only after having been endorsed by a referendum except when the Council passes the amendment by a two-third majority vote.

Article 69 — No action to make an amendment may be initiated or pursued if the result compromises the territorial integrity of the republic, nor is it possible to effect an amendment of the democratic republican regime of the state.

Chapter 12 on Provisional Rules

Article 70 — The organizations provided for in this Constitution take their final shape within the six months following its publication, during which time the president of the republic takes all measures necessary to ensure the smooth operation of public authorities and state continuity.

Article 71 — The existing laws and bylaws remain in force as long as they do not conflict with this Constitution or have not been amended or abrogated.

Article 72 — This Constitution shall be published in the official gazette.

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Algeria

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

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[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe"—quotation marks as received; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Editorial — They want the "de-Islamisation" of Algeria!

In many of the Muslim countries today, a multiform battle is taking place between many projects of society, each one pretending to be the best. This competition can in itself be "healthy" if the rules of the "game" are fair for everyone and all under the irrefutable verdict of the people who will have the freedom to decide and chose amongst the "pretenders". However, when the necessary condition for "an impartial game" is suspended, then the game should be stopped because any subsequent results can hardly be taken as genuine. This basic condition is of course the people freedom to chose amongst the "pretenders" who do really exist on the "market" which can at time be very different of the ruler desires of what political forces should exist. This is formally known as "the people sovereignty".

The real conflict in most of the Muslim countries today is in fact about the re-establishment of the above condition which is the freedom of the people to chose. Wanting to repress at all cost the "voices and forces of change" within the Ummah by the "ruler for life" process, has consequences far beyond some internal quarrel for power. It diverges the Ummah's energy for self-protection and progress, by cracking it cohesion from inside and widening the gap between the "streets" and the "palace". The recent events in Lebanon are only one amongst many tragic remainders of this basic fact. Nevertheless the transition to a state of "real freedom of choosing and dismissing rulers without a shed of blood or a smallest disturbance of stability", has become an irreversible and unavoidable path. One would have hoped to see that given the hostility hardly hidden in the international environment and for the interest of the Ummah and of each Muslim country, rulers (kings, princes or military representatives), taking an active part with honestly in a smooth transition which enable them to enter history from "its large door" as they say. Unfortunately reality is different, particularly concerning those who have taken power by force and are opposing the natural flow of History by all means. For those cases and because the Ummah does not have enough time, the Muslim people are convinced that "barricaded doors" must be forced open no matter the sacrifices.

In Algeria, the condition for a "fair game" between political forces, was suppressed brutally by a military coup in January 1992. So that it can never be forgotten, the military intervention was also being asked for by some political "forces" as soon as the results of the legislative elections of December 91 were known. These "forces" were "one day for the ballot box and the next day against", calling for its disregard because the "people made the wrong choice" according to their dishonest way of "playing the game".

A perverted political situation was born out of the military coup. The real representative political parties have asked for the re-establishment of the above condition (the people real freedom to chose) in order to resume "playing", while some of those which "microscopic weight" has been revealed, preferred to take this "opportunity" and advance behind the military tanks in what has become an empty field. When the cat is busy fighting something Else...

They did not try to adapt their projects of society to the aspirations and "personality" of the Algerian people. No, for them the Algerian people are politically "handicaps" and at best "immature".

While most of the military hierarchy responsible for the coup d'Etat was more interested in keeping its privileges and would have been glad to "grow a meter-long beard" had the FIS given them solid guaranties, "microscopic but poisonous anti-Islamic forces" have rallied the pushiest on the basis of "you scratch my back I scratch yours" or "you provide the sheer force, we provide the ideological cover and justifications". Some of those ideologues "prophets" say "Religion is the opium of the people" and others says "Religion should be separated from politics" (which they have hastily translated into "Islam should not mixed with politics") It is not hard to understand why in their projects of society, Islam is taught of as a "retrograde" obstacle that must be dismantled as a first step toward their phantasmic societies. Being behind the military arms arsenal has given them the false illusion of being able to do a job a mightier force could not achieve in 132 years. Once again their duplicity toward the Algerian people is highlighted in their lack of courage to speak up their mind concerning Islam. Some hide it by changing the name of their party to something less repugnant to an Islamic mind, while others pretend that the Algerian people have only to ape the "other side of the Mediterranean" for Algeria to be able to export her own TGV! Some of them do not hesitate to

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"ride" on legitimate cultural or social demands trying to "drive" them to the wrong battlefield against Islam for a selfish and illusionary political gain. This denotes their underestimation of how deep Islam is rooted in Algeria. it also shows their vain persistence in trying to change the people to adjust to their projects while it would have been easier to modify their own plans to suit the people. Then again, all the "spirit and the letter" of their projects will be lost!

Rumours in Algeria are talking about changing the official position of Islam to please the "eradication" ideologies. They better know that all that has been written on paper since January 92 remain just that as far as the deep reality of Algeria and the Algerian people are concerned.

Waving a war against Islam pretending fighting the FIS is one thing, attacking Islam in the open with such impudence is like preparing the "one hundred years war" over again, and this is the real danger of "the Algerian society not being able to sustain it without a real fracture", and not some kind of vote distribution of eventual future elections as some pretend.

When culture is used for propaganda of the moment!

A Euro-Mediterranean conference on "cultural patrimony" took place last week in Bologne, Italy and where ministers of culture of all concerned countries participated. The Algerian military regime minister Mihoubi was present. On the cultural domain Mr Mihoubi could not find anything better to say then to echo to the participants some of the propaganda myths about the ongoing struggle in Algeria. The job of the military regime government ministers when ever they are in front of an international audience, seems to be limited to that of making propaganda as if the outside world is waiting for their reading of the situation to understand what is going on in Algeria and what are the real causes of the tragedy there.

Mr Mihoubi declared during the conference that basically the armed struggle in Algeria is inspired by "retrograde thinking which causes crimes and destruction which endanger the security, the harmony and the stability of our societies, and obstruct their development". Goebbels would not have put it any better!

It is interesting to note that this self-declared expert in communication (propaganda rather) was the spokesman of General Zeroual "presidency". He was the one who has shaped this strange and dangerous amalgamation between communication which at time of war is propaganda, and culture. The obvious objective is the use of the Algerian culture in the ongoing fight. This was exactly what Nazi Germany tried to use culture for. Mr Mihoubi and his like have been "walking over" the "flowers" in the Algerian History "gardens" while looking in "its dustbin" for what they can bring up to the present, give it a brush or a new paint and make it another weapon against Islam.

It is known that Mr Mihoubi likes to pose for the TV with an imported electronic notebook in his hand during "parliament" hearing session. Would that give him the right to declare that those who are fighting the military dictatorship have a retrograde way of thinking? It is not quite sure that, if for example, Mr Mihoubi and one of the "retrograde Islamists" from one of the military jails, are dropped in a foreign country, the first will be identified as an Algerian and the second not. The opposite will most likely be the case as the second will be the one who still carries with him some "cultural patrimony" and all of it locally made.

History has taught those who care to learn that a cultural process cannot be imposed from "top to bottom". It is not something to be decreed on paper. Culture has the tendency to take the other way around. It is society that at the end imposes what it has selected. It did not take more than a few years for the "artificial culture" imposed by "cultural dirigisme" of the communist countries, for seventy years or so, to collapse, and "the natural was back galloping".

In the very recent History of Algeria, political movements such as the PAGS (Party of Socialist Avant Guard) and the pan-Arabism Baathist have been collaborating with the military regime for three decades. They were in charge of everything that touched the civil society. How many people voted for them when the chance to freely chose, was given to the Algerian people in both 1990 and 1991 elections? Very few indeed.

"Cultural masochistics" of this type will come and go and the rock of Tarik Ibn Ziad (Gilbratar rock), the commander of the ISLAMIC army, will always be there to remind them and others the place of Islam in that part of the Mediterranean sea as it has remained with those before them.

Algeria: Nahnah Urges Defense of Islamic Values

MM0905142596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 May 96 p 6

[Report on interview with Algerian Islamic Society Movement leader Mahfoud Nahnah by 'Abdallah al-Hajj in Jeddah; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of the Algerian Islamic Society Movement [HAMAS], has called for the establishment of a strong

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Islamic state capable of defending Islamic identity and culture, without charges of terrorism and extremism being attached to Islam.

In an interview he gave to AL-HAYAH following his performance of the rites of pilgrimage, he criticized some Islamic regimes that try to deal with "the phenomenon of violence solely through security confrontation that is dictated by secular ideas."

Asked how HAMAS evaluates the progress made by the national dialogue so far, Nahnah said that political life that is bent on creating stability and development must be founded on a serious and profound dialogue based on the element of trust and the absence of the seeds of suspicion among the parties to the dialogue. The Algerian political dialogue has suffered a great deal of wavering due to the lack of trust and the entrenchment of suspicion, epitomized by the attempts to dictate opinions and impose decisions from above and stemming from the mentality of "after me the deluge." This state of affairs has caused the dialogue to become one of muscle-flexing, obsession with winning, and the pursuit of the policy of scoring victories only. This has in turn led to negative consequences such as "a quick succession of negative events, an increase in the incidence of violence, a growth in the number of victims, a national catastrophe claiming the lives of over 60,000 victims, the squandering of about $3 billion, the planting of fears in the hearts of national and foreign investors, an increase in the rate of unemployment, an increase in borrowing, the flight of university intelligentsia and scientists, and the mounting up of grudges and the desire for revenge."

Shaykh Mahfoud Nahnah added: "The national dialogue in Algeria has passed through several stages and was only saved by giving the people the opportunity to express their opinions through the elections held on 16 November 1995, after the interlocutors proved their failure to conduct dialogue and to achieve even a minimum degree of understanding.

"Those who boycotted the dialogues and elections tried to gain importance but failed and their positions receded, while those who seriously participated in the dialogue and the elections succeeded in changing the political map and in improving their positions. This prompted the boycotters to admit (later) that they had been shortsighted, so that their frustration was manifested and their foundations were shaken.

"The boycotters and the participants, however, were in agreement on one important point: the need to hold another round of dialogue to pave the way for the completion of the process of building the legitimate institutions, without which the state would collapse even if it was headed by a president of the republic who was freely nominated and popularly elected.

"We believe that the completion of the building of the national institutions necessitates agreement among the politicians that the bloodshed should first be stopped by all those who are in a position to stop it so as to stop the bleeding and then crown this achievement with a national reconciliation from which only the machinery of destruction and the methods of confrontation should be excluded."

Shaykh Nahnah said that he believes that the presidential elections "have clearly and most positively shown the existence of two clear currents in the arena: the nationalist Islamic democratic current and the real eradicationist secular current, which is suspect." He added: "The arena can accommodate the two currents. But it is up to the masses to express their views on them in a climate which is free of all falsifications and attempts to distract the masses' attention into marginal issues aimed at gaining time or providing the opportunity for persistence in destroying all the vestiges of Algeria's right to exist."

Asked if he thought that the absence of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] from participation in the effective stages of the dialogue would impede the progress of the dialogue, Shaykh Nahnah said: "In our opinion, the dialogue has embraced all those concerned, starting with the men of the political class and ending with the men of the FIS, and even those who ruled the country and whose ideas, or some of them, were the cause of the country's destruction and of driving it to the brink of collapse.

"It must be said that the authority insisted that its dialogue with the FIS men be conducted in a different manner from its dialogue with the men of the other parties, though it would still be a dialogue. What is lacking is not the conduct of a dialogue but rather the achievement of success through the dialogue, a matter which necessitates trying again and again with patience and persistence, because the wound is deep and its treatment requires diversity [of medicines] and persistence. We believe that those who reject the dialogue or declare it a failure are not right nor are they qualified to lead the country."

Shaykh Nahnah denied that "there is a division and conflict between HAMAS and the FIS in the accepted sense." Elaborating, he said: "It cannot be said that there is some sort of rift between HAMAS and the FIS, as no cohesion or unity of stances existed between them due to their conflicting views and practices. Our movement has made a point of ensuring that its practices shall be peaceful, its methods shall be democratic,

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its concepts shall be Islamic, its nationalism shall be Novemberist, and it will refrain from all methods that lead to bloodshed, create feuds, or lead to subservience.

"Ordinary Algerians are Arab Muslims like other Arab and Muslim peoples. They abhors injustice, accord hospitality to guests, and love freedom, justice, and dignity. A leaf of evil cannot cover up a tree of good and virtue. Those who say that the Algerian people are ill-tempered, spirited, and prone to violence and the passing of sentences against their opponents do not know the Algerian people or their eyes have been blinded by the lack of education manifested by some of Algeria's sons. This also applies to other Arab and Islamic homelands.

"But if these people mean by their statements that the Algerian people are ill-tempered and easily provoked against aggression and imperialism, then I say long live this ill-temper and this emotionalism, for had we not possessed them, imperialism would have remained in our country until doomsday. In this sense, emotionalism is an Islamic value prompted by care for religion and the homeland. Can submission, humiliation, and the finding of justifications [for wrong actions] be considered signs of manhood and magnanimity?!"

Asked how he sees President Liamine Zeroual's political future in the light of his success in steering the current stage, Nahnah replied: "The fact that President Zeroual is occupying a position of authority does not necessarily mean that he has been successful in managing the current stage as much as it means that the Algerian state has been able to survive despite the severe hurricane that has been trying to destroy its moral and material foundations. As to whether he is equipped to continue the road that could lead to a dialogue leading in turn to prosperity and stability, that depends on the extent of his adhering to and not flouting the Constitution as well as his ability to interact with the political figures who are capable of participating in removing the fuse of blind sedition, his ability to adapt to the new national and international developments, and his ability to acclimatize himself to the new style of development, thus saving the country from any ignition of the socialist front which is about to explode."

The Algerian Islamic leader criticized the phenomenon of religious and ideological extremism which has become a characteristic phenomenon sweeping the Islamic world. He added: "The problem does not lie in religious or ideological extremism as long as it continues to be extremism in ideological matters. But when it develops into severe actions against opponents, it becomes a dangerous phenomenon demanding speedy and comprehensive treatment before it breaks out into flames and spreads thus making it hard or even impossible to control, God forbid."

He added: "The treatment of the problem of extremism, the containment of its repercussions, and the curbing of its local or international dangers demand the rallying of scientific, religious, ideological, psychological, cultural, and political efforts and a tightening of grip on the sparks of fire that might spread."

Shaykh Nahnah noted that "some methods of dealing with this through security confrontation alone have produced worse effects, as they have produced physical reactions in addition to psychological reactions whose traces cannot be eliminated in the near future. We are aware that dealing with it by security means was dictated by some secular ideas — particularly in our country — originating in its [Algeria's] separation from its history and its heritage."

He drew attention to the fact that "modern [theories of] upbringing are based on the idea of the child's participation in protecting the home and the environment, in family decisionmaking, in devising methods for increasing welfare and the spread of virtue under one roof. How then could we Arabs fail to widen our decisionmaking machinery and public and positive participation in building culture and in consecrating security and stability?

"Modern methods of upbringing have made a Christian feel proud of his Christianity, preach for it, and form social and political organizations through which to formulate his ideas. Likewise, Judaism has followed and continues to follow the same course. The guardians of both these religions, be they rulers, rabbis, or clergy, have risen to defend their personality and identity and resorted to all the most noble beliefs they hold and to the worst political, military, and information methods that afflict us, to safeguard their identity and their particular characteristics. Islam and the Muslims have suffered enough attacks by these people which have covered all fields and are aimed at giving the Arabs and Muslims an ugly image and putting people off associating with them, as can be seen from the numerous films and stories to which young and old alike cling."

He added: "When matters affect Islam and the Muslims, the 'Zionists and Crusaders' raise hell and their proxy writers in our countries raise a clamor, which is irrefutable proof that the political and educational systems [in the Islamic and Arab countries] have not given the necessary attention to defending our personalities, our identity, and the religious and cultural characteristics of our society.

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"The machinery of destruction that is based on a small measure of science will inevitably rise to face up to the machinery of destruction that is armed with official heavy weapons, the people will rush to defend themselves out of zeal and pride, and probably also out of piety, and the targets will then become confused and the picture before them will become hazy. Then the homeland will pay the price and the victims will fall and confrontation will impose itself despite the honest people's denunciation of this method, which is not acceptable to the protectors of the revelation [the Koran], the protagonists of the true religion, and the true defenders of their homeland and their religion.

"The state's failure to defend [Algeria's] identity and cultural and religious characteristics will prompt others, whether the state likes it or not, to rush to do so on its behalf acting in a manner which will infuriate the state and disturb the climate. Hence it is necessary that a defending state which acts also as a true Islamic point of reference should be established."

Egypt

Egypt: Musa's Absence From Forum Due to 'Genuine Indisposition'

NC0905204096 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2020 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 May (MENA)—AL-AHRAM reports that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's absence from the Mediterranean Forum meetings, which began in Italy yesterday, is due to a genuine indisposition.

The paper says in its issue of tomorrow that Musa fell ill during a dinner hosted by Culture Minister Faruq Husni at his home in honor of UNESCO Director Frederico Mayor, after attending talks between President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan.

AL-AHRAM adds that Musa underwent several tests today and doctors determined the cause of his illness as exhaustion. The results of the tests were all good and reassuring. But the physicians ordered him to rest at home until Saturday [11 May].

Ambassador Fathi al-Shadhili, assistant foreign minister for European affairs, is chairing the Egyptian delegation to the Mediterranean Forum meetings.

Egypt: French, Italian Naval Units Begin Arriving for Exercise

NC0905183896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1800 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 May (MENA)—The vanguards of the French and Italian naval units have started to arrive in Alexandria port to take part in the joint exercise "Cleopatra 96" that will be held 11-16 May.

The focus of the exercise is centered on planning and commanding naval battles while faced with active enemy naval, air, and electronic warfare, as well as on providing supplies to the various naval units.

It seeks to train the naval unit commanders and crews in using their ships and mastering surface-to-air and surface-to-surface combat.

The exercise involves Egyptian, French, and Italian naval units of various types: destroyers, frigates, missile patrol boats, submarines, antisubmarine vessels, and naval air units.

The maneuvers are part of the program of joint exercises with fraternal and friendly states.

Egypt: U.S. Stance on Qana 'Massacre' Criticized

NC1005071296 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0545 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 May (MENA) — Today's Cairo newspapers criticize the United States for its overt bias in favor of Israel and for provoking Arab public opinion because of this bias. The newspapers also express astonishment at the U.S. position on the UN report regarding the Qana massacre in Lebanon and at the United States' insistence on acquitting and supporting Israel. The newspapers say the United States is deliberately harming its relations with the Arab countries and is not even trying to be courteous to its friends in the region but is insisting on embarrassing them before their people.

In an editorial entitled "The U.S. Bias and the Provocation of the Arab People," AL-AKHBAR says the continuous criticism of the Clinton administration's overt bias in favor of Israel is no longer confined to Arab voices, which some might accuse of being emotional, but includes worldwide criticism, from several countries, including the EU countries and Russia. The paper adds that surprisingly, the official U.S. reaction to this growing crictism is even greater stubbornness and arrogance.

In another comment headlined "A European-U.S. Confrontation," AL-AKHBAR says that in an age in which the United States employes a double standard and adopts a policy of complete bias toward Israel, there is a need for a more effective European role on the international and Arab levels.

In an editorial, AL-JUMHURIYAH expresses astonishment at the U.S. position toward UN Secretary General

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Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali because of the report prepared by his military adviser, Major General Frank van Kappen, on the Qana massacre. Under the title "U.S. Insistence on Defying Arab Feelings," the newspaper says that although the facts are clear as regards the Qana massacre, which was deliberately committed by Israel, the United States insists on acquitting and supporting Israel and defying and provoking the Arab people.

Noting that during his visit to Lebanon Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur, the Egyptian People's Assembly speaker, described the Qana massacre a shameful blemish on Israel's history, the newspaper says this massacre will also remain a shameful blemish in the history of the United States, which has always supported Israel's aggression against the Arabs. The United States has always had the veto right to protect Israel from international condemnation.

In an article in AL-JUMHURIYAH, Chief Editor Mahfuz al-Ansari says that UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali's battle against the United States and Israel over Major General Frank Van Kappen on the Qana massacre is not an easy one. It is battle for survival for Dr. Butrus-Ghali, whose term as UN Secretary General comes up for renewal this year. Dr. Butrus-Ghali has shown a great deal of courage and responsibility in defying the United States and Israel, which have been trying to defend this abominable crime.

In his daily column in AL-JUMHURIYAH, writer Kamil Zuhayri says Dr. Butrus-Ghali is now facing U.S.-Israeli pressure that smacks of Israeli thuggery and U.S. blackmail. Zuhayri notes that Israel, the only nation born via a UN resolution, is also the only nation that has constantly trampled on the UN resolutions and has tried, through several wars, to impose a fait accompli by force and by war. He adds that the U.S. position is obvious because the United States has been the permanent ally of every aggression by Israel, sometimes by using the veto and sometimes by watering down the UN resolutions condemning Israel. The U.S. vetoes at the UN Security Council are too numerous to be counted. The U.S. struggle within the United Nations to acquit Israel of racism is also not forgotten.

Meanwhile, AL-AHRAM newspaper notes that yesterday's visit by a People's Assembly delegation to the site of the horrible and inhumane massacre in Qana, which Israel committed against a large number of innocent civilian Lebanese people, has several meanings. This is especially true in terms of the visit's timing and the serious developments seen in the region after Israel launched its brutal aggression against Lebanon.

AL-AHRAM points out that, in a bold move, the People's Assembly decided to cancel a scheduled visit to Israel as a kind of protest against foolish Israeli practices against innocent Arab people.

The People's Assembly, the paper says, decided that the parliamentary delegation's visit be to Lebanon to show Egypt's solidarity with the Lebanese people. Or, the paper adds, like Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur, speaker of the People's Assembly and head of the Egyptian parliamentary delegation said, to express in the name of the whole of Egypt—president, government, parliament, and people—Egypt's appreciation of struggling Lebanon and its steadfastness to regain it occupied land and confront Israeli aggression.

The paper notes that from this perspective, it can be said that the visit's timing and circumstances and the Egyptian delegation's insistence on inspecting the site of the Qana massacre reflect nationalist feeling on the part of the People's Assembly. This feeling is a reflection of the Egyptian public's general stand toward Israel and its hostile practices in the region.

The paper says that with this move, the Egyptian People's Assembly expressed the stand of all Egyptians who denounce and condemn the Israeli aggression. If only those in Israel understand the message and realize its deep meaning, which is not difficult for anyone to understand.

AL-AHRAM says the strong and unrestrained statements by Dr. Surur in Beirut also represent the Egyptian public's stand. Especially so when he said we accuse Israel of wrecking the peace process by practicing aggression against civilians. He also said that those who seek peace must not attack peaceful nations. All Arab parliaments and other popular institutions should organize numerous visits to Lebanon in the future to show Arab support for the Lebanese people, who now need this collective stand.

Meanwhile, AL-WAFD newspaper says in its editorial that after the publication of the findings of the UN investigation into the Qana massacre, Arab countries must transfer the battle to the Security Council and expose what the United States and Israel did during Operation Grapes of Wrath in Lebanon.

The paper adds that this is a golden opportunity for Arab countries to reveal true U.S. policy in the Middle East and remove the mask the United States hid behind when it appeared as a neutral partner in the peace process. Later, it turned out to be a colluding partner with Israel against Arabs, the paper notes.

The paper says facts revealed in the investigation have proven that Israel deliberately killed children, women, and elderly people it knew took refuge in the UN camp

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in Lebanon. The balance is beginning to tilt against the United States and Israel, the paper adds.

Libya

Libya: Interior Aide on Regional Ties, Lockerbie

MM0905143396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 9 May 96 p 4

[Interview with Muhammad Mahmud al-Hijazi, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Justice and Public Security, by an unidentified correspondent in Tunis; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What were the goals of your visit to Algeria?

[Al-Hijazi] My recent official visit to Algeria was in response to an invitation from Interior Minister Mustapha Benmansour and local and environmental groups. It took place in the framework of the joint security committee. It focused on bilateral cooperation between the two countries as regards the joint committee for borders and the joint committee for developing border areas. And also the various aspects of security cooperation between Algeria and Libya.

During the visit I met with President Liamine Zeroual, and the meeting was an opportunity to discuss various aspects of cooperation between the two countries in the security sphere and the meetings of the Higher Algerian-Libyan Committee, which will convene in Libya in July at prime minister level. We also broached the decision taken by the Higher Committee in the industry, agriculture, and mining domains and the steps taken so far in this connection.

During the meeting we discussed the Lockerbie issue and Algeria's position, which will continue to support Libya until the embargo imposed on it is lifted. Algeria continues to maintain this fixed stand in all local, regional, and international forums. We also discussed the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] and preparation for the next Maghreb summit.

The discussions also broached the results of the visit and my talks with Algerian Interior Minister Mustapha Benmansour. We confirmed that we had made great strides in all areas of security cooperation between the two countries, proceeding from the premise that Libya's security is part of Algeria's security and vice versa, and that the two countries' security is part of North Africa's security. Thus it was stressed that cooperation between Libya and Algeria should be strategic and fruitful cooperation in the interests of the two fraternal countries and peoples.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Does bilateral security cooperation between the two countries include terrorism as well?

[Al-Hijazi] Cooperation between Algeria and Libya includes all the issues relating to security, proceeding from the fact that security is the basis for stability and progress. And without security, no state can experience stability, development, or progress. Thus we in the two countries are cooperating in all that concerns combating terrorism, atheism, organized crime, narcotics crimes, and all the main issues that concern security, in order to safeguard the two countries' stability.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] There is talk about Libyan efforts to help Algeria overcome its security problems with the Salvation Front. What truth is there in this, and was this issue discussed during your talks with Algerian officials?

[Al-Hijazi] No, that issue was not raised. However, we in Libya care for Algeria. As I said earlier, the Algerian-Libyan relationship is a strategic, not an ordinary, relationship. As this is the case, cooperation between the two countries in all spheres is open.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Is the border problem between Algeria and Libya an obstacle impeding relations between the two countries?

[Al-Hijazi] There is no problem between Algeria and Libya as regards the border issue. There is a joint committee which has for a year been working quietly and diligently according to the plan drawn up for it since its establishment by the interior ministers of the two countries. The committee in question has made great strides in this connection, and we expect it to complete its work by the end of the year. It will hold its next meeting in Tripoli 18 May.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is Libya's position on the UMA, and is Libya in favor of convening a Maghreb summit?

[Al-Hijazi] Our main concern is for the UMA to continue, as we are eager to make it a success. This position stems from and is in line with our belief in Arab unity, which we are advocating and working to achieve. We believe that the UMA is capable of playing a principal role in the region. Thus Libya is one of the states keen to bolster and develop this union and make it a success. With regard to the next Maghreb summit, Algeria — in its capacity as the current president of the union — will arrange that.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It was reported recently that 400 extremists escaped from a Libyan prison and that

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a confrontation took place between them and security forces. What truth is there in this?

[Al-Hijazi] That is fanciful information and is absolutely untrue. How can 400 people escape from a prison? That is unbelievable. It proves to us that what was published by the Western and foreign press reveals that Libya is the target of an onslaught and a conspiracy. The regrettable thing is that even the Arab press is doing the same without any credibility and without making any inquiries or referring to sources.

However, that does not worry us at all, because we in Libya are following our course confidently, and Libya is a secure state. Proof of this is that it has begun to develop tourism, and a large number of tourists is currently visiting Libya. And the Arabs and foreigners living in Libya are enjoying peace, stability, and security. Thus, those lies are designed to serve the objectives of those promoting them, and we are taking no notice of them.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Is there in Libya extremism similar to that in Egypt and Algeria? And is it true that Libya is sheltering armed extremist groups from neighboring states?

[Al-Hijazi] I do not believe that there is in Libya religious extremism of the type you are talking about. Because the Libyan people are a Muslim people and have the same understanding of the religion, and there are no factions in Libya. The allegation that Libya is sheltering extremist fundamentalist movements is absolutely untrue. How can we be against atheism and terrorism and yet embrace such movements, whose concepts conflict with our ours?

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Is there anything new on the Lockerbie issue?

[Al-Hijazi] Libya is willing to bring about an end to this issue with the Security Council and the Western states by bringing the two Libyan suspects to a neutral third country, because we in Libya are confident that they are innocent. Europe has begun to discover the truth, namely that Libya has nothing to do with the Lockerbie case. What proves that the United States pushed Libya into this case-lie is what a CIA officer said in his testimony — that Libya is innocent and has nothing to do with the Lockerbie case, and that another state is implicated in it.

Regrettably, the U.S. Administration is insisting on accusing Libya in the Lockerbie case. We know that it is all geared to the election campaign. When this administration encountered no substantial response to the Lockerbie issue, it fabricated a new issue, accusing Libya of manufacturing chemical weapons — another U.S. lie directed against Libya. Numerous presidents and officials who visited Libya found out that Libya is not manufacturing or producing chemical weapons, and that the factory [masna'] in Tarhunah is a large pipe [unbub kabir] within the great man-made river which will carry the water to Tripoli next September on the occasion of the celebrations marking the 1 September revolution.

We in Libya expressed our willingness to receive an international committee to refute these U.S. allegations, but within specific terms. We believe that what the United States has practiced against Libya is terrorism against Libya and other states such as Sudan, Iraq, and Iran because of their political stands, which conflict with U.S. Middle East policy, which is biased toward Israel.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is Libya's position on the current normalization process between some Arab states and Israel, and also on the peace process in general?

[Al-Hijazi] Libya wants a just and real peace that guarantees the right of 4 million Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland and to establish a Palestinian state. Because we are for peace, not a capitulation that leads to the abandonment of rights. There are numerous pieces of evidence that Israel does not want peace, since it continues to admit Jewish immigrants into Palestine and to prevent the Palestinians from returning to their homeland. Thus we do not see any peace in what is happening now.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is the status of Libyan-Tunisian relations?

[Al-Hijazi] They are good and strategic relations, especially at the security level, since there is cooperation in all spheres.

Libya: Editor Condemns UN Submissiveness, U.S., Israel

LD0905201796 Tripoli JANA in English 1743 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, 9 May (JANA) — The political editor of the JAMAHIRIYA NEWS AGENCY [JANA] has called on the international community to take a prompt and serious act to stop Israeli savagery which is supported by America, as this is a source of serious and direct threat to international peace and security.

The editor said that the U.N. General Secretariat report which confirmed that the Israeli terrorist shelling of the international forces camp in the Lebanese town of Qana, the massacre which claimed more than a hundred

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children, elderly and women who sought refuge in the camp from the Israeli savage aggression, was deliberate and did not leave the world in any doubt regarding the viciousness and barbarism of the Israeli enemy and its flouting for all international conventions and all human values, which confirm the direct threat caused by this enemy for peace and security, not only in the area, but in the whole world.

On the other hand the American position which supports absolutely the Israeli terrorists and defends their crimes whether by threats to use the veto against any proposal to condemn them in the security council, or by the rejection of the U.N. secretary general's report and its ridicule and humiliation for the secretary general himself, and styling the American government as a spokesman for the Israelis, reaffirming once again that such blind American support for the Israelis, all this has gone beyond all limits to the extent that the Israelis and the Americans have become one thing.

The editor added all this makes us stand before some urgent facts the most important of which are: first — it had been established who are the real terrorists who threaten the peace and security of the world and who supports them and support their terrorist acts. Second — the U.N. report which proved by ground investigations and tangible evidence the deliberate Israeli responsibility in shelling the international forces' camp and that horrible massacre, which claimed innocent civilians inside the camp, obliges the international organization to formally condemn the enemy and denounce those who support them, and to call the Security Council immediately to adopt a resolution on the level of double atrocity, for targetting an international camp and disarmed civilians. The international community would accept nothing less than the application of Chapter 7 of the U.N. Charter against the Israeli criminals who are considered the actual serious threat for international peace and security. Third — once again the United Nations finds itself at a cross roads. Either it proves that it represents the will of international community and becomes on the level of aspirations held on it by the nations when they joined it, or it reaffirms what we have previously signaled and warned about that the international organization lost its credibility and betrayed the principles and roles for which it was established and became totally submissive to the stronger members and that its security council became an instrument of terror and tyranny against smaller nations. Accordingly these nations have the right to withdraw from the organization and abandon its resolutions and act towards establishing an alternative organization which is liberated from the colonialist domination and capable of achieving justice and equality amongst the nations on the basis of reciprocity and the respect of sovereignty.

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir on Gulf Relations, Regional Issues

MM0805133596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 May 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by 'Abdallah al-Hajj: "Al-Bashir Says: Bin-Ladin Came as Investor, and We Are Obliged Not To Allow Him To Perform Hostile Activities"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah — Sudanese President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir has announced that his country will not allow its territory to be used for hostile activities against any neighboring state, especially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He added that he stressed to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz "the constants of the policy pursued by Sudan, which does not accept the use of its territory in any activities that could harm a fraternal state."

The Sudanese president, who was speaking at a press conference prior to his departure from Jeddah yesterday, told AL-HAYAH that his meeting with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz was positive, and that its results will emerge very soon in the form of a continued improvement in Saudi-Sudanese relations, since "the summer cloud resulting from the Gulf war has begun to disappear, and this phase will be transcended so that the eternal relations between the two sides can return to their previous status."

Answering a question put by AL-HAYAH, he said that Usamah Bin-Ladin [Saudi businessman accused of financing terrorism] entered Sudan as a businessman and an investor in the trade, agriculture, road building, and construction sectors, "and we are obliged to prevent him from performing any hostile activities."

He revealed efforts being made by Sudanese diplomacy to restore Sudanese-Gulf relations to their previous status. He said: "We are seeking to restore our relations with all the Gulf states, including Kuwait. I do not think that the Gulf war should regarded as an obstacle to the restoration of inter-Arab relations. I believe that this feeling is prevalent among Arab leaders, especially in the wake of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which would not have happened had it not been for the disunion from which the Arab nation is suffering." He pointed out that at the Cairo summit after the Gulf crisis Sudan called for a solution within the Arab framework and for not resorting to force to resolve Arab disputes. "But emotions were heated at the time." Al-Bashir added: "However, all the leaders are now certain that

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this state of fragmentation has given the Arab nation's enemies a chance."

The Sudanese president called on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to play its pioneering role and to work to restore Arab solidarity. He said that Saudi Arabia's "standing in the Islamic and Arab worlds gives it the opportunity to rescue the Arab world from the state of fragmentation that prompted Israel to strike Lebanon and show no respect for the Arab states holding talks with it. It brutally attacked Lebanon without fearing for the peace process, because it is aware of the state in which the Arab world is at present. We are confident that Saudi Arabia is capable of uniting this nation, which is targeted by its enemies."

He described relations with Egypt as "eternal since the dawn of history and civilization and since the beginning of human existence along the River Nile." He added that "relations have always been characterized by cooperation, but some disagreements might occur sometimes. The important thing is how to resolve and surmount them." He said: "The test was the Security Council's encroachments, and the Egyptian stand emerged then, and we responded, because we are seeking to mend the rift, especially as we consider Sudan Egypt's rear and vice versa. This was clear after the 1967 war when Israeli aircraft targeted Egyptian aircraft and ships. They were moved to Sudan to protect them. So these relations must be restored to their normal status. This is our aim."

He pointed to the infiltration of some "Afghan Arabs" into Sudanese territory. He said that Sudan lifted restrictions on Arabs' entry into its territory because of its Arab and Islamic orientations, with a view to increasing investment in its projects, "but some of them exploited this opportunity." He added: "We will not allow any person to perform any hostile activities against the Arabs."

He criticized the emergence of repudiationist groups [jama'at al-takfir] among young Muslims, describing it as "a phenomenon threatening Islamic security, as these young Muslims have been seduced. Their zeal has been exploited and they have been introduced to strange ideas. We in Sudan are suffering from this phenomenon, as some elements attacked the Revolution Mosque and the homes of Hasan al-Turabi and Usamah Bin-Ladin."

Al-Bashir urged ulema, clerics, and schools in the Islamic world to deal judiciously with "that group of convulsive young men, explain Islamic teachings to them, and tell them that what they are doing has nothing to do with Islamic ethics. In fact they should be isolated from society lest they seduce other young people."

He criticized the attempt to associate Islam with terrorism. He believes that "it is an attempt to distort the magnanimous image of Islam." He urged the Muslim media "to defend their faith, which is targeted."

The Sudanese president said that the main cause of his country's problem is Khartoum's support for the Eritrean revolution during its struggle — which caused Ethiopia to espouse the rebel movement in southern Sudan.

He expressed his surprise at the change in Eritrea's position after its independence and the idea of it turning into a state threatening the security of the Red Sea region, shipping, and states in the region. He criticized the Eritrean Government's decision to hand over the Sudanese Embassy to a Sudanese opposition quarter, saying: "It is a precedent which represents a blatant violation of international charters."

He said that the United States is responsible for the Security Council's adoption of resolutions on the imposition of sanctions on Sudan. The United States, he said, "seized the opportunity of the attempt on Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak to condemn Sudan." He asked about the reasons for conducting a secret trial in Ethiopia of three elements suspected of involvement in the attempt on Mubarak. He said: "How can they stand trial secretly in a case that has preoccupied the world as a whole?" He added: "We are convinced that Sudan is not involved in this case and we are confident of the soundness of our position in the Security Council. We will adopt the same stand as regards the issue of downgrading diplomatic representation, and we will continue our political action to clarify our true position."

The Sudanese president commended the legislative elections held in his country recently and the voters' rush to cast their votes, especially in the southern areas. He pointed to the economic and social development efforts made by the Salvation government in Sudan. He said that "the first cause of the inflation and economic deterioration is the war in the south, which the government is working earnestly to end peacefully."

He denied that the contacts conducted by government quarters with al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of the Sudanese opposition, were aimed at entrusting him with forming a cabinet. However, he confirmed that consultations are continuing with al-Mahdi and other symbols inside and outside the country in order to arrive at a formula that guarantees security and stability throughout Sudan.

The Sudanese president expressed his regret at the crash of a Sudanese airliner while on a flight between Waw in the south and the Sudanese capital. It tried to land in Khartoum airport but a strong sand storm made it difficult for its captain to bring it under control, hence it crashed and was destroyed. He denied that there was any criminal scheme behind the incident.

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GCC: Gulf Press Condemns Israeli 'Insolence' Over Qana Massacre

NC0905133296 Paris AFP in English 1024 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dubayy, May 9 (AFP) — Gulf Arab newspapers denounced Israel's "insolence" toward the United Nations over a report about the massacre of Lebanese refugees at a UN camp last month.

"Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres's insolence became a paroxysm when he blamed the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the carnage in Qana," where 102 civilians were killed in Israeli shelling on April 18, the Qatari weekly AL-'URUBAH said.

Qatar's English-language newspaper GULF TIMES meanwhile accused Washington of totally supporting Israel and trying to free it from blame.

The Israeli criticism of UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali over the report "shows unprecedented insolence," the United Arab Emirates daily AL-FAJR said.

"The United Nations should send those to blame for the massacre before a court" like those who committed "the worst crimes against Moslems and Croats" in the former Yugoslavia, the Saudi daily AL-YAWM said.

Peres said Wednesday [8 May] it was "scandalous" to imply, as the UN report did, that Israel would have deliberately shelled a UN compound packed with refugees. And he lashed out at UNIFIL for allegedly letting Hizballah guerrillas, with their families, shelter in its camps while continuing to fire rockets and mortars at Israeli targets.

A spokesman for the US ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, said she was shocked that Butrus-Ghali had decided to draw unjustified conclusions about Qana.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Special IDs To Be Issued for 'Stateless Arab' Population

JN0905105796 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 22 Apr 96 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait City, April 21— Kuwait has decided to issue special identity cards to its Bedoun (stateless Arab) population next month as part of a comprehensive solution to their problem.

A spokesman for the Interior Ministry said on Sunday [21 April] that the proposed IDs will allow Bedouns to move freely and legally until their files are carefully studied.

Head of the Ministry Public Relations Department Lt. Col. 'Adil al-Ibrahim said the decision was taken by the Executive Committee formed to resolve the problem of Bedouns during a meeting on Saturday. The meeting was chaired by Interior Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah.

Kuwait officially calls Bedouns as Illegal Residents and three years ago the government set up the executive Committee to resolve their problem. Recently, the Committee was reorganised with Interior Minister becoming its chairman.

The minister has recently told the national Assembly that the number of "actual" Bedouns was 51,000, down from 121,000 announced earlier.

The minister was quoted as saying that 50,000 Bedouns revealed their original identity and the ministry knows the identity of 20,000 others while it was still checking files of the remaining 50,000. The executive Committee granted Kuwaiti nationality to 100 Bedouns and is about to grant 265 more.

During Saturday's meeting, the Executive Committee divided Bedouns' applications for citizenship into two parts. The first part, which includes Bedouns who claim right to first-grade citizenship, was referred to the Higher Committee for Nationality.

The second are those of the pre-1965 files. It was decided to give them priority in accordance with certain groups to be announced later.

Dr. al-Ibrahim also said that the special IDs will be given to Bedouns on the basis of certain conditions to be announced soon.

Yemen

Yemen: Minister Denies Handing Over Riyadh Bomb Suspects

MM1005102496 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 May 96 p 1

[Report by Naji al-Harazi: "Yemeni Interior Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Saudi Arabia Has Not Asked Sanaa To Hand Over Anyone in Connection With al-'Ulayya Blast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa — Informed security sources in Sanaa have denied that the Yemeni authorities have handed over to the Saudi authorities seven Yemeni nationals whose names were mentioned in the investigations into the Riyadh blast.

Yemeni Interior Minister Colonel Husayn Muhammad 'Arab has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that "cooperation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the

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Republic of Yemen is good, and we make joint efforts whenever necessary."

However, he added that "the Saudi authorities have not requested anything of that kind (extradition of wanted elements]. If that happens, it will be done under a security agreement that provides for such matters and sets rules capable of achieving the two countries' interests."

Col. 'Arab was commenting on press reports published in Yemen to the effect that Sanaa has recently handed over to Saudi Arabia seven Yemeni nationals whose names were mentioned in the investigations into the blast at the U.S. training center based in the Saudi National Guard's headquarters in Riyadh last November.

As is known, the four Saudi nationals arrested by Saudi security authorities made full confessions about their planning and implementation of the blast operation. They said in their confessions that they had purchased the explosives and arms from Yemen.

The four detainees also said that they entered Yemen by infiltrating [across the border] and that they purchased on the arms market explosives, namely TNT; a number of Kalashnikov rifles; ammunition for these rifles; and Russian pistols and ammunition for them.

The perpetrators said in their confessions that a Yemeni national had helped them to arrange for the purchase of the arms and explosives, which were later smuggled across the border to carry out the blast operation.

At another level, Yemeni Interior Minister Col. 'Arab spoke to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT about the security agreement which was supposed to be signed between Saudi Arabia and Yemen recently. He said: "There was a draft agreement on cooperation between the two countries in the security sphere. We submitted our observations about it and agreed on it with Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz when we met in Tunis recently."

He added: "We in Yemen are awaiting the final reply from the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to sign the agreement at any time."

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Iraq: Chief Delegate Comments Before 5th Session With UN

JN0905184996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1815 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 9 May (INA) — As part of the fourth round of dialogue on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs, the delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat held their fifth working session this evening.

Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, told reporters before the session that Iraq's consultations with 13 Security Council members aim to brief these countries on Iraq's views. He added that Iraq believes that the 13 Security Council member states support the draft agreement reached by Iraqi and UN delegates on 10 April before U.S.-British interference in the course of the dialogue.

Dr. al-Anbari said complications arose when the United States and Britain interfered in the sessions. Iraq hopes that the two delegations will return to the agreement they reached on 10 April. An INA correspondent in New York said the two delegations will hold another session later tonight, 5 PM New York time.

Iraq: 5th Working Session With UN Delegation Begins

JN0905180996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1700 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 9 May (INA) — As part of the fourth round of talks on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs, the delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat began their fifth working session in New York this evening.

The two sides held their fourth working session yesterday as part of the current round to reach an agreement on oil for food and medicine.

Iraq: Western Envoys Comment on Meeting Between Saddam's Men, Israelis

NC0905145596 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Western diplomatic sources said that a meeting was held, under Turkish sponsorship, between officials in Saddam's security apparatus and Israeli officials.

According to the source [as heard], contacts between the regime and Turkey to reach a formula for ending outstanding problems, particularly in connection with the Kurdish problem, and prepare for concluding an agreement with Israel have become possible.

The source adds that Saddam's regime previously tried to achieve this goals via several channels, including Palestinian mediators. But the slow progress of these attempts and the regime's feeling of its increasing isolation at the Arab and international levels have made him resort to Turkey.

The western diplomatic source adds that the Turkish and Palestinian channels proceeded in parallel. But the Turkish contacts made more progress in the wake of the recent Turkish-Israeli security agreement.

The source revealed that the regime's representatives expressed a desire during the meeting with the Israelis to reach a reconciliatory formula.

The diplomatic source expects some progress along that channel in the next few months.

Iraq: 'Secret' List Bans Various Tribes From Military Academies

MM1005123596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Qusayy Issues Secret List of Tribes Allowed To Join Iraqi Army"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Informed Iraqi sources in the Jordanian capital have revealed that the special security organs headed by Qusayy, Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's younger son, have issued lists of the tribes whose members can be admitted to military academies, or can study at Iraqi universities at the Defense Ministry's expense and at the Police, Air, or Naval Academies during the next academic year.

The special security directives stressed that Kurds, Shiites, Christians, members of the al-Sabi'a, al-Yazidi, and other religious minority groups cannot enroll in these academies. The lists do not include many of the blacklisted Sunni tribes.

The sources said that many members of the al-Dulaym (in the west), al-Jubur, al-'Ubayd tribes, and natives of the city of Mosul (in the north), on whom the Iraqi Army used to rely, are banned from joining the academies.

The Mosul natives alone made up 33 percent of Iraqi Army officers, while members of the al-Dulaym, al-Jubur, and al-'Ubayd tribe represented 45 percent of those working in the security organs and the Republican Guard.

The informed Iraqi sources stressed that all Kurds, including those who are loyal to the Iraqi leadership, are banned from enrolling in the military academies. They added that the al-Samara'is (natives of the city

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of Samara') and the al-Khazrajis (from the al-Khazraj tribe), many of whom were removed from their sensitive army posts after some of them, such as former Chief of Staff Nizar al-Khazraji, and Military Intelligence Chief Wafiq al-Samara'i, split with the Iraqi president, were removed from the lists.

Iraqi Shiite or Sunni southerners are still banned from military academies, with the exception of the Sunni al-'Su'dun tribe, to which President Saddam Husayn recently has shown some favors.

It should be mentioned that there are over 12 military academies in Iraq, three of which are for training officers for the Iraqi Army, in addition to the Technical Military Academy, which trains engineers for the armed forces, the Air Force [Academy] for air force pilots, the Arab Gulf Academy for Iraqi naval officers, the Officers Academy, the National Security Academy, which supplies officers to the security organs, the al-Bakr Academy of Higher Military Studies, the Police Academy, the Tikrit Armored Vehicles Institute [ma'had al-duru'], and the Defense Ministry's International Language Institute.

Many other institutes and schools supply the Iraqi Army with middle-level cadres, in addition to those studying in Iraqi universities at the Defense Ministry's expense. Most of them are studying at the faculties of medicine and engineering. Graduates from civilian faculties are also contracted if the army needs them.

Iraq: Internal Security Reserve Officers Urged To Register Names

JN0605194896 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Defense Ministry's Mobilization and Statistics Directorate urged all retired internal security officers who are covered by the reserve service regulations and are within the legal age and reserve officers from Classes 20 to 46 to report to the mobilization committees in the various governorates during May to determine their status with the reserve service for statistical reasons. This was announced by the directorate. Following is the text:

For statistical reasons, all retired internal security officers who are covered by the reserve service regulations and are within the legal age and the reserve officers from Class 20 to Class 46 should report to the mobilization committees in the various governorates to determine their status with the reserve service within May 1996. They should bring the following documents:

1. A copy of their civil status identity card.
2. A copy of their Iraqi nationality card.
3. A copy of their retirement card.
4. A copy of their ration card.
5. A copy of their number and date of their retirement or discharge order.
6. A place of residence certificate issued by the neighborhood chief and certified by the police post.

[Signed] The director of the Mobilization and Statistics Directorate, who holds the rank of a staff major general

Iraq: Opposition Follow-Up Meeting 'Within 2 Weeks'

MM1005102996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 May 96 p 2

[Report by Salwa al-Ustuwani in Damascus: "Iraqi Opposition Follow-Up Committee To Meet Within Two Weeks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi opposition sources in Damascus have said that the follow-up committee emanating from the deliberations meeting held by representatives of 10 Iraqi Islamic, Kurdish, and Arab nationalist groups in the Syrian capital in early April will meet within the next two weeks. A leading figure in the Iraqi Communist Party [ICP] said that, if invited, the ICP will not attend the meetings.

Bayan Jabr, representative of the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] to Syria and Lebanon, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the committee will meet either in Tehran, Damascus, or Iraqi Kurdistan, and that the date and venue for the meetings will be fixed during the contacts currently being held with all sides. Jabr added that the committee will examine setting up a political committee in the field and based in Iraq "to activate action in the field to topple the Iraqi regime." Its agenda will also include looking into organizing a broadened meeting with 40 figures representing all Iraqi opposition groups without exception. He also stressed that an invitation was sent to the ICP in this context.

On whether the disagreements which surfaced during last month's meeting have been settled, Jabr said that the "current bilateral meetings are aimed at settling all these matters and clearing the hurdles which we expect to encounter during the forthcoming meeting." He explained that he held discussions and consultations with a member of the ruling Syrian Ba'th Party's National Command on the arrangements concerning the committee's forthcoming meeting. He added that the Syrian official conveyed Syria's blessing of the meeting and its readiness to support Iraq's and the Iraqi opposition's unity. Bayan said that he also discussed all

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these also with Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, in Damascus last week.

He said that "the current situation in Iraq requires urgent action, efforts, and contacts, because we expect there will be insurgency in the army or a violent popular uprising, because there is a chaotic situation in southern Iraq, and we want to bring forward the opposition meeting to examine the situation and form a political committee to deal with any potential development in Iraq."

Meanwhile, Humayd Majid Musa, secretary of the ICP Central Committee, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that his party was not invited to the meeting of the committee emanating from the deliberations meeting, and stressed that the ICP will not attend the meeting. He added that "we have made our refusal known, in view of the fact that we did not participate from the start in laying the foundations and defining the current action plan. We will refrain from participating in any activity in which we have not been involved from the start, unless they wish to rectify the error that they made initially."

On how the error could be rectified now that the meeting has been held, the ICP official said that "it would be possible to hold a new deliberations meeting to which the ICP, which was excluded from the last meeting, would be invited. However, if the meeting is restricted to some parties and not others, it does not represent all the Iraqi opposition."

He said: "The Iraqi opposition will only achieve its objectives if there is a change in direction, in the interests of the opposition's unity."

Iraq: Nuclear Threat to Libya Said To Prove U.S. 'Terrorism'

JN1005113496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 10 May (INA)—AL-THAWRAH stresses that the official Arab indecisiveness and collusion with the hostile U.S. behavior has given Washington additional chances to pounce one Arab country after another.

AL-THAWRAH, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says in an analysis today that this Arab position has cleared the way for Washington to loot and strike at the region because it does not expect to face any obstacles from the Arabs or even make its hostile, unfair missions more difficult.

The paper adds: Undeterred, the United States persists in using the logic of arrogance, terrorism, and aggression to bring others under its unfair control. Meanwhile, feelings of indignation and disgust with the U.S. style of dealing with nations are running rampant.

The paper says that when the Clinton administration threatens Libya with a nuclear strike, as announced by a U.S. Defense Department spokesman, it not only introduces itself as a first-class terrorist, but also as a power that completely disregards international law, world security, and other people, particularly the Arabs. Washington did not hesitate to make this threat shortly after the Zionist aggression against Lebanon, which was blessed and backed by the United States, and before the wounds could heal.

The paper says that the United States insists on deeming Libya's Tarhunah site a chemical weapons plant, but does not provide any tangible evidence to prove it. Libya, on the other hand, has supported its position with several pieces of evidence. This insistence, accompanied by warnings that amounted to a threat to use nuclear weapons, proves to the Arabs once again that no Arab is safe from U.S. threats. It also shows that no law, norm, or force can curb the hostile U.S. madness, except for the Arabs themselves, who, if they want to, can put the United States where it belongs and spare themselves unlimited, unending peril and evil.

Concluding its analysis, the paper says that Libya is the target of the plots and aggression today. Iraq, Sudan, Lebanon, Somalia, and Yemen were previous targets. There will be no exceptions if the Arab regimes continue to bury their heads in the sand, believing that this will earn the satisfaction of the White House, which has decided to destroy everything Arab as long as it remains a supporter and follower of Zionism.

Iraq: Article Views Gulf War, Israeli Role

96LH0133A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 31 Jan 96 pp 12-13

[Article by Shamil 'Abd-al-Qadir]

[FBIS Translated Text] The most salient goals of the United States' aggression against Iraq in 1991 and its occupation of Arab oil sources under the pretext of "liberating Kuwait from the Iraqi occupation" have become clear. The United States wished to signal to the Gulf countries that their only option is "U.S. assistance." The Gulf countries sought this assistance regardless of any condition, constraint, or circumstance. The United States thus confronted these countries with the "U.S. reality," which is that these countries are worthless without the United States. After the aggression against Iraq, the United States also came to view Arab oil as henceforth worthless. In other words, the influence of Arab oil has shrunk.

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The most salient lesson of the aggression against Iraq in 1991 is that "Israel" waged a new type of war against Iraq and the Arab nation, a war no less dangerous then Israel's previous wars against the Arabs. In its war of aggression against Iraq, the United States had purely Zionist aims, the outlines of which are becoming clear with each passing day. The United States used its influence to "prevent" Israel from "openly" entering the war against Iraq. America's argument was that it did not wish to provoke ordinary Arabs and Muslims. However, this prevarication was quickly exposed in the first days of the aggression. The United States attempted to present "Israel" as a "state" defending itself against the Iraqi missiles that were raining down upon it in the first week of the war. "Israeli" diplomacy focused on one objective, which was to present the Zionist state as if it had been subjected to an Iraqi aggression. The United States has concealed the greater part of "Israel's" participation in the 30-state aggression.

Some countries wanted the "American" war to reach Iraq's depth. They wanted U.S. destruction to reach all parts of Iraq, and they wanted, based on U.S. and British advice, to prevent "Israel" at that time from participating as a "concealed enemy" in this effort. However, the continued aggression against Iraq has revealed this imperialist card and has uncovered Israel's active participation in the aggression against Iraq together with more than 30 armies and countries that contributed help, soldiers, money, and expertise to the U.S. occupiers.

The war ended after more then 40 days of missile bombardment against Iraq, and after the Americans had emptied NATO stores of weapons of destruction that were launched against Iraq to saturate its territory. With the war's end, the United States thus put its seal — in the language of heavy fire — on the message which it had wished to convey to the Gulf countries, i.e., that their oil and financial power no longer influenced the U.S. and the West as it had in 1973. Through their aggression against Iraq, the Americans took revenge against the region's Arabs for what happened to the United States in 1973. The Americans, after their destructive war against Iraq, told the Arabs that the age of Arab financial and oil power was over, that Arab oil could no longer protect any Arab country which stood in the way of United States and Israeli ambitions, and that Arab money must be "exploited" to serve the imperialists, not the people of the region. This is what actually happened after 2 August 1990, when billions of "Arab" dollars were channeled to service the U.S. war machine, along with thousands of Arab soldiers which the collaborator Arab regimes inserted in the battle against the Iraqis. The Iraqis know better then anyone that these soldiers bear no responsibility, as they were powerless and subject to their masters' orders.

In its aggression against Iraq, the United States formerly precluded a direct, Israeli military role in the battle. But it nonetheless gave "Iraqi" targets to the Israeli Air Force. Many indications derived from targets that were subjected to missile and air strikes during the aggression prove the existence of "Israeli fingerprints." "Iraqi" targets were also subjected to a joint, U.S.-Israeli strike. Iraq's determination to intensify its missile strikes against targets in occupied Palestine explains to us the "particular circumstances" which allowed "Israel" to participate in the aggression.

The fact that 39 Iraqi missiles fell on "Israeli" targets explains to us the "type" and "nature" of "Israeli" participation in the 30-state aggression. In 1994, I met with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan for a lengthy interview that was published in ALIF BA'. According to the deputy prime minister, the 43-day aggression against Iraq would have been shorter had we not struck Israel with 39 missiles.

This means, to observers and analysts, that the United States continued its aggression against Iraq beyond the period that had been decided by the U.S. leadership in its war plan. It did so as a "courtesy" to Israel. They performed this courtesy for the Israelis by striking Iraq for a period longer than that decided in their plans, which they had formulated before 17 January 1991. They struck Iraq for 43 days to take vengeance for Iraqi missiles and to take revenge on Iraq, because it had "dared" to strike Israel's depth.

The Americans, after their aggression against Iraq and occupation of Gulf oil sources, "imposed" a new type of control on this region. Their primary partner in this is Israel. The Americans succeeded in taking maximum advantage of the "results" of their aggression against Iraq to "achieve" "political" gains for Israel. The "Israelis" also succeeded in achieving their goals through their "conspicuous silence" as Iraqi missiles rained down on their heads. They concluded the Madrid, Oslo, and Wadi 'Arabah agreements and are on their way to concluding another agreement with another confrontation state. Shim'on Peres expressed quite accurately the importance of an agreement with that confrontation state, saying that "our agreement with them will equal with the recognition of Israel by 20 Arab states."

Do we exaggerate in what we are saying? It would seem so at first blush. Some tell us that we have been afflicted with paranoia regarding the Israeli danger, because we see "Israel" in every corner. However, we are not sick like those who went mad in the past with paranoia regarding the Zionists, which paralyzed their minds so

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completely that they bowed to U.S.-Israeli schemes. This would have been correct before Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977. It was also correct after the Camp David accords. However, it is not correct at present. It would be correct to say that Israel has exploited the blockade imposed on Iraq to create a split between the Arabs. However, Israel is failing completely to alienate the Arabs from Iraq. The current Israeli danger — which has no precedent, not even in the days of Gamal Abdel Nasser and years following his death — threatens the Arab oil countries more so than other countries of the Arab nation. This danger grows as a function of the Gulf's isolation from Iraq. Whoever believes that Iraq in its current circumstances can no longer play its regional role is wrong. Iraq, despite its pain, is growing, adapting, developing, and moving in a number of directions based on the fact that it exists. Iraq is a presence in the region despite U.S.-Israeli presence. Accordingly, Iraq is acting in the interest of the Arabs and their international role.

The war of aggression against Iraq has proven that any banner which blocks the view of Iraq after these lean years is absolutely meaningless. That war did not bring Iraq down to its knees. Nor did it achieve its goals completely. Half of Israel's goals were achieved in the January 1991 aggression, meaning that Israel has a presence in the arena after being completely isolated since 1948. Israel's presence in the "embrace" of some Arabs will never mean that the Arabs will desire her. Israel is more aware of this than those who signed with her contracts for an "Israeli" mandate. Israel knows better than others what an Iraqi presence in this sensitive region of the world means. Israel has not forgotten the songs of the first Israelites in Babylonia. No Israeli has forgotten symbols that are deeply rooted in the Zionist psyche, such as Nebuchadnezzar [Chaldean king of Babylon, captured Jerusalem in 597 BCE]; Esarhaddon [681-669, reasserted Assyrian domination of Philistia]; Ashurbanipal [continued the military enterprises of his father, Isarhaddon]; and Sennacherib [705-681 BCE, Assyrian king who laid siege to Jerusalem in 701 BCE]. These symbols alone make the Israelis recalculate whenever a new agreement is concluded with parties in the region. These symbols are best not forgotten in the Israeli memory. They are the key to the past and present, and perhaps the future.

Dwelling on this important point brings us back to putting together an understanding of "Israel's conditions" for solutions proposed for the region. Many Arab countries have "reached a mutual understanding" with Israel. However, Israel realizes that huge statues of symbols "which stir up" the memory and anger are being erected. They are being erected only in the Fertile Crescent.

Does Israel realize that its pressure on the U.S. administration will bring it no advantage? Does Israel fully realize the implications of its current focus on Iraq? Some Arabs are aware of the dimensions of the destruction to which Iraq was subjected after 1991. They know that this destruction is continuing under the banner of the economic blockade. Have they ever once asked about the dangers stemming from a partnership with Israel under the solutions proposed to solve the region's crises? Such a question appears rarely amid "Israeli" actions in the Arab region. However, it is a logical question if we juxtapose it with events in the region, which are transpiring in a climate of complete disregard of the will of the Arab masses.

The Arab masses, despite their meager participation in crucial Arab decisionmaking, are asking, rightly, questions of this type. Why do not some of them stop torturing the Iraqis and turn their attention to the Zionist plan for the Arab region? The Arab countries, with deliberate disregard of Iraq's role, are themselves experiencing extreme suffering under U.S.-Israeli influence. From the Arab East to the Arab West, they are experiencing unbounded suffering and pain, which will only stop when the Iraqi hemorrhaging is stopped. Perhaps, in the foreseeable future, this hemorrhaging may stop, so that we will then know the extent of the regional power which our nation can wield throughout the world. Israel Shahak [Yisra'el Shahaq], who translated from Hebrew a book entitled, "The Zionist Plan for the Middle East" by Oded Yinon, warns of an "Arab" vacuum and calls for Israel to fill it.

Yinon, an Israel journalist with links to the Israel Foreign Ministry since the 1980's, has published a Zionist document which Israel is interested in implementing. This document puts forth a new Zionist strategy based on the old-new current circumstances. According to Shahak's translation of Yinon's book, this plan is based on two assumptions: that Israel's existence requires that it become a "regional, imperialist power," and that the roots of Israel's existence derive from attempts to fragment the Arab region and to divide the Arab countries into small states. This process of fragmentation depends on the ethnic composition in each Arab country. Israel's goal is to make these small states into "cantons" subordinate to Israel and a buttress for its legitimacy. Israel Shahak, a university professor, states that this plan is the essence of Zionist, strategic thought.

In reality, blame for the "swallowing" of several Arab countries from the Zionist viewpoint will rest with those who remain "silent" before the ink is dry on the signature [on the contract] with the historical enemy.

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Israel is well aware that it cannot swallow Nebuchadnezzar and Sennacherib, even if these symbols are statues made out of inert marble. However, it may perhaps swallow marble stones in elegant showcases in "Arab" museums fabricated to substantiate the existence of "countries" in the pasts of these states. Are the Arabs aware of the dimensions and effects of what Iraq has been subjected to since January 1991? The aggression against us is not merely one involving myriads of missiles and bombs. It is but one of the Arab nation's battles to protect those of its symbols that have aroused and still arouse fear in our enemies. Iraq is a country crowned with eternal symbols regardless of the vicissitudes of time.

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Israel: Peres Says UN Report on Qana Scandalous

TA0905164296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres termed the UN report on the Qana incident scandalous, one-sided, infuriating, adding it may bring about the end of the UN's influence in Israel. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar says Mr. Peres was speaking at a news conference in 'Akko. Peres noted that the authors of the UN report ignored the presence of Hizballah in Lebanon and the katyusha rockets they fired on Israel for a week before Israel reacted.

Answering a question about a peace agreement with Lebanon, the prime minister said only when Lebanon makes peace with itself will it be able to make peace with its neighbors.

Israel: Details on Jerusalem Arrests; Hamas Squads Said Operating

TA0905183196 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 9 May 96

[Police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This evening the media was allowed to disclose that 11 Israeli citizens from East Jerusalem have been arrested on suspicion of assisting the terrorists who carried out the suicide attacks on the No. 18 buses in Jerusalem and at Ashqelon junction. This Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] conspiracy was unveiled by the Shin Bet and the Israel Police over the last few weeks. The 11 members of the Hamas organization operated from Jerusalem's Ra's al-'Amud neighborhood. They were recruited in the Gaza Strip approximately one year ago and underwent military training prior to their deployment as a military unit of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam brigade. Three months ago, five of the group's members managed to smuggle into Jerusalem the three terrorists who carried out the suicide bombings on the No. 18 buses and at Ashqelon junction. The terrorists' explosive charges were placed in duffel bags and hidden in an orchard near Ashdod junction. From there, they were taken to East Jerusalem.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 9 May in a similar report by police affairs correspondent Uri Kohen-Aharonov notes that "as East Jerusalem residents possessing Israeli identity cards, the members of the group could move freely inside Israel. On one of their drives, they reached the area of Gan Yavne, and there, at an prearranged hiding place, they found two big explosive charges in large military duffel bags. From there, the two explosive charges were taken by car to a new hiding place in Jerusalem's Ra's al-'Amud neighborhood. It is worth noting that the explosives were smuggled into Gan Yavne from the Gaza Strip by a different hostile element. The third suicide terrorist managed to get to Ra's al-'Amud on his own. The East Jerusalem cell hid the third terrorist's explosive charge near the Abu-Dis mosque or in the mosque itself."]

On 25 February and 3 March 1996, the five suspects drove the terrorists to the predetermined sites of the attacks. One man was taken to Ashqelon junction while the other two were driven, one week apart from each other, through the streets of East Jerusalem to the end of Jaffa Street, near the walls of the Old City. In the two attacks in Jerusalem, the accomplices from Ra's al-'Amud drove the suicide terrorists to the bus station in Safra Square on Jerusalem's Jaffa Street below the steps of the municipality building. In each case, the terrorists waited only a short while before taking the first No. 18 bus that stopped at the station, only to detonate their explosive charges within minutes, blowing themselves up in the middle of the bus. [passage omitted]

After the Ra's al-'Amud arrests were made public, security sources said today that Hamas squads are still operating in East Jerusalem, noting that their members have easy access to any location within the Green Line.

Israel: Poll Shows Peres Preserving 5-Point Lead Over Netanyahu

TA1005085296 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 10 May 96 p 1

[Gallup Institute poll]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Question: If elections for the premiership were held today between Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu, for whom would you vote?

Answer: Peres — 45 percent; Netanyahu — 40 percent; undecided/refuse to answer — 15 percent.

Question: If the Knesset elections were held today, for which party would you vote?

Answer (given in terms of Knesset seats): Labor — 39 (as compared to 44 in the present Knesset); Likud+Tzomet+Gesher — 37 (40); Meretz — 7 (12); SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] — 4 (6); Moledet — 4 (3); United Torah Jewry — 5 (4); NRP [National Religious Party] — 7 (6); Arabs — 6 (5); Third Way — 3-4; new immigrants — 3-4; undecided/others — 3. [passage omitted]

The poll, which was conducted on 8 and 9 May, included 1,139 persons who constitute a representative sample of the adult Jewish population. The final results

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incorporate the results of a poll conducted among the Arab sector last week. Maximum margin of error is around 4 percent.

Israel: Poll Shows Peres Lead on Netanyahu Down by 2 Percent

TA1005093396 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 10 May 96 p 2

[Geocartographia Institute poll directed by Professor Avi Degani and Dr. Rina Degani; all answers given in percents; results of last poll given in parenthesis]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: If the elections for the premiership between Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu were held today, for whom would you vote?

Answer: Shim'on Peres — 49 (50); Binyamin Netanyahu — 45 (44); undecided/no answer — 6 (6).

Question: If elections for the Knesset were held today, for which party would you vote (number of seats in present Knesset given in brackets)?

Answer: Labor — 42+ (43+) [44]; Likud, Tzomet, Gesher — 38 (39) [40]; Meretz — 7 (7) [12]; Moledet — 3 (2) [3]; National Religious Party — 7 (7) [6]; United Torah Jewry — 4 (4) [4]; SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] — 4+ (4) [6]; HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] — 5 (4) [3]; Third Way — 2 (2); Yisra'el Ba'aliya — 6 (6); Arab Democratic Party and Islamic Movement — 2 (2) [2].

The poll, which was conducted on 8 and 9 May, included 983 interviewees constituting a representative sample of the adult Israeli population. Maximum margin of error is around 3 percent. Lists that did not pass the minimum quota needed for being elected were not included in this forecast.

Israel: Netanyahu Views Likud Government Policies

TA1005104296 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 10 May 96 p 7

[Interview with Israeli Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu by David Makovsky; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Makovsky] Do you think the decision of the Palestine National Council on its covenant was a good step?

[Netanyahu] It's not clear. I thought it was originally, but now you see that they really didn't do anything.... We must insist they first maintain their obligations — which they haven't done so far — including a real repeal of the covenant.

One of the senior people in the PA [Palestinian Authority] said, "We just froze the issue." Well, thanks a lot. I mean, you had two and a half years. Of those 28 provisions, about 20 of them speak directly of eliminating Israel. You could just specify that you eliminate them, and in fact they haven't, so it smells like a con job.

[Makovsky] Before Oslo 2, you said you would not deal with the PA. After Oslo 2, you said you would deal with the PA, but not with 'Arafat. Now you say that you would consider dealing with 'Arafat. Which Netanyahu should the public believe?

[Netanyahu] If I judge as prime minister that it would be necessary for the security of the State of Israel or for the maintenance of peace, then I would certainly not rule it out. But I don't want to run after 'Arafat and I don't think that he deserves the right now for a clear response to that question since he has not fulfilled any of his obligations. [sentence as published]

[Makovsky] How can the public expect you to work with 'Arafat when you have called him a murderer? What would be the criteria for you to meet him?

[Netanyahu] The full fulfillment of his obligations and my assessment of the needs of whether such a meeting is important for the State of Israel. I am certainly not going to hold hands with him, traipsing through the palaces of Europe....

I certainly don't think that we should grovel before him or run to his beck and call every time he snaps his fingers. (People) will get used to a different Israeli government.

[Makovsky] Senior security officials voice concern that if there is a sustained impasse, let alone deterioration on the Palestinian track, there could be a wilting of Israel's burgeoning ties with the Arab world, including Israeli-Jordanian ties. Do you agree?

[Netanyahu] I don't think so. Arab interests are quite different from the Palestinians. There is no reason why the relationships with the Arab countries should wilt.

[Makovsky] What is the scope of settlement activity you envision?

[Netanyahu] In those areas which we designate as security and settlement zones, obviously the Palestinian Authority has no jurisdiction. Therefore, there ought to be no limitation on Israeli settlement. The only limitation is the extent of government policy, the amount of infrastructure you are willing to put in there.

[Makovsky] Are you planning to expand within settlement blocs?

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[Netanyahu] I have been thinking along those lines and, yes, I have a proposal to that effect too. There are other proposals, I don't wish to deal with it.

[Makovsky] Would this be new settlements, increased population in existing ones or their expansion?

[Netanyahu] There are two possibilities. I certainly don't rule out new settlements, that's obvious. But my view about settlement activity has always been...that...it has to be built on an economic infrastructure which means larger urban centers.

[Makovsky] Would you want more settlement in the Jordan Valley?

[Netanyahu] I would want to do it, but the only way you're going to do it is if you create much better roads, a much better transportation system so people can live in the Jordan Valley and work in Jerusalem and get there in 10 minutes....

If previous governments had understood this, believe me, around (those roads) you'd have clusters of communities growing, because of economic imperatives, because land is so scarce in the Gush Dan area.

[Makovsky] But would your settlement map derive from your vision of final-status partition?

[Netanyahu] Of course. I'm not talking about the partition in terms of sovereignty because my belief is that, whatever the Palestinian entity is, it should not have those two powers which could endanger our security and our survival. I think that we should minimize the friction. Oslo right now increases the friction because of the B areas (of shared security responsibilities).

[Makovsky] So you're saying you want no friction, so you'll avoid building near densely populated Arab areas, but instead build in bloc areas?

[Netanyahu] I don't want to draw a specific line and I don't wish to create a precedent and say that because Arabs live in Hebron, Jews shouldn't live in Hebron. But I think that the right way to maintain the overall balance between us and the Palestinian autonomy is to reduce misunderstandings by defining clearly what the powers are and what the zone of the jurisdiction of the powers of the Palestinian Authority is and define those areas....

[Makovsky] Therefore, is it fair to say that the notion of cantons, namely Palestinian islands in an Israeli sea in the West Bank, is not viable?

[Netanyahu] They are not going to put us in isolated little islands, and we are not going to do it to them.... I would offer the Palestinians a fair deal. They can run their lives, but not endanger ours.

[Makovsky] Don't you think the Israeli taxpayer has a right to know your vision for how you would expand settlements?

[Netanyahu] My vision is that we will improve the economy and the economic situation of all Israelis.... One of the things I intend to do is to allow (settlement activity) through free-market forces.... I will not subordinate the government's budget to this, but allow it simply through the release of public lands and transportation lines and allow natural growth.

[Makovsky] I guess there is a reason why you are avoiding giving numbers on the scope of settlement. Is this because you want to attract the floating middle voter who is expected to tip this election?

[Netanyahu] I haven't formulated any specific numbers. I am for a qualitative and not necessarily quantitative settlement approach.... The floating vote wants continued settlement. (They are) far more hawkish than people realize....

[Makovsky] With the Palestinian Authority now actually in parts of the West Bank, from a philosophical and factual perspective, is it not fair to say that the epic ideological struggle of the last quarter century regarding the Whole Land of Israel or the Greater Israel movement is now over?

[Netanyahu] I disagree. I think the choice is a little bit sharper, because while it is true that we recognize facts on the ground, we never gave up our belief in our rights and our basic right to this land.

This is our land, and there is also a non-Jewish minority that has to live in peace and civic equality. We believe it is our country, just as France is the country of the French people and there are non-French minorities there.... The difference between us and Labor is that many in Labor don't believe that. They think that we stole the country from another people and we are here by dint of being homeless refugees who have to be given something.

[Makovsky] But hasn't the question of the West Bank been transformed from an ideological to a security question?

[Netanyahu] We are into an era when we have to recognize that we cannot always fulfill our dreams. The task of statesmanship is to gaze forward but also to have your feet planted on the ground. In this I differ from Mr. Peres. He seems sometimes to be detached from reality.

[Makovsky] How do you reconcile your claim that you won't roll back those areas currently held by the

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Palestinian Authority with your claim that you will chase Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorists everywhere? Will this not lead Israel, by design or otherwise, to find itself occupying the Gaza Strip?

[Netanyahu] I think the mere fact that they know that we will enter or act as needed (is enough). And I don't have to specify, there are so many ways, especially by way of intelligence which has to be reestablished and can be reestablished if you change the policy. The policy right now is to rely on the PA Preventive Security Service. You actually rely and shut your eyes and ears.

[Makovsky] How will you reconcile both declarations of yours? Can you do it without troops?

[Netanyahu] The first thing you do is you restructure the operational capability. The first thing to do is to take care of those (presumed collaborators) who helped you; we have abandoned them. There are people inside Israel, many who are destitute. Take care of them so people know that they'll be taken care of. That's the first thing.

The other thing is we will recreate and reestablish the intelligence infrastructure. We will give the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] freedom of action to act as we (did before Oslo). And I think the very knowledge that we are doing that will force the Palestinian Authority to act more responsibly to discharge their obligation to fight terrorism.

[Makovsky] PA officials say they will not just watch if Israel marches in there. Are you not talking about clashes with the PA, not just with Hamas? Furthermore, Oslo was built on the notion that they are in charge of their areas. Are you seeking a unilateral change of Oslo, which the Palestinians say will cause the accord to collapse?

[Netanyahu] The right of self-defense, in any contract, international or otherwise, always precedes any other provision. But I wouldn't say we would rush forward to act.... If they do what is needed, we don't have to act. But I cannot tolerate and I will not accept the issue of terrorism as a fact in our lives.

[Makovsky] You say you have a surprise choice for defense minister. I think people may react differently to Moshe Areas as defense minister than they would to Refa'el Eytan. Don't they have a right to know whom you will select?

[Netanyahu] I am very lucky to have a half-dozen talented candidates, including the most celebrated soldiers and leading figures of public life. All three are obvious candidates, and there are more. It is a rich man's dilemma.

[Makovsky] During Operation Grapes of Wrath, Eytan called for extending the security zone in southern Lebanon. Yet, wasn't it an expanded presence in Lebanon under his direction in the 1980's which created Hizballah?

[Netanyahu] I respect Raful and admire his directness, but don't necessarily agree with him on all issues, including expanding the security zone.

One of my main criticisms of Grapes of Wrath is that there was no diplomatic or economic pressure on Syria (prompted by our) urging the U.S. to take a different tack in dealing with Syria. Specifically, just as there are no American technology transfers, oil sales (or) trade with Iran and Iraq, Syria should be warned that it would be subject to these same sanctions.

At the same time, it would benefit from the lifting of the sanctions if it stopped supporting terrorism. If the Syrians expel the Palestinian terror groups and dismantle the Hizballah presence in southern Lebanon, there should be no reason why, after a period of time, Syria should not be removed from the state-terror list.

[Makovsky] The Clinton administration thinks you are mistaken when you indicate that we can buy the Syrians off by dangling their removal from the terrorism list and have them forget about the Golan.

[Netanyahu] They are misreading al-Asad's priorities. They think his first priority is the Golan. I think it is the survival of his regime. The Golan is way down on his list of priorities, after Lebanon and obtaining the legitimacy of the Western world.

[Makovsky] At its core, are you not writing off a peace treaty and normalization with Syria in favor of a partial approach?

[Netanyahu] We are not giving up on the goal of normalization, but Syria is not ripe. Now we should by a series of other agreements that do not involve withdrawing from the Golan. The Golan remains in our hands. I don't think a peace treaty is achievable with Syria at this time.

[Makovsky] Can you give examples of agreements you can reach with Syria?

[Netanyahu] He gets off the terror list, and we get an end of terror, increased water supplies for both our countries.

[Makovsky] Former secretary of state James Baker says in his memoirs that he banned you from walking into the State Department in 1990 because you said his administration's policies stood on a "foundation of distortion and lies." In general, it is widely regarded that relations with the U.S. during the Likud's rule from

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1990 to 1992 reached the lowest depths since the Sinai Campaign. How can the public expect you to maintain the current honeymoon with the U.S. of the last four years?

[Netanyahu] I believe the relationship with the U.S. transcends any political party in office, common values, common interest. I think I know the U.S. inside and out, certainly as well as anyone running for prime minister. I will make good relations with the U.S. a cornerstone of our policy. I don't believe in purchasing American or international support by giving up our most precious national assets, including security. By the way, I don't remember being denied a single meeting in the U.S.

[Makovsky] If elected, will you seek to maintain the current level of $3 billion of U.S. assistance to Israel?

[Netanyahu] In the short term, I would maintain it, but I would adopt a long-term plan to wean Israel off American financial aid beginning with the $1.2b. economic aid. (The remaining $1.8b. is military aid.) If our economy grows as I believe it would, then $1.2b. in economic aid will become insignificant. I believe I can achieve this and wean Israel away from the $1.2b. within one to two terms in office.

[Makovsky] Can you tell us operationally what the first 100 days of a government under your leadership will look like?

[Netanyahu] We have a team working on that right now. Basically, there are two main areas that we want to (focus on). We are going to try to pass during the first 100 days key legislation for privatizing the economy and services in most areas of Israeli life.

For many of these things you don't require laws. Some of them require changed legislation; others require merely an executive decision to cancel all sorts of bureaucratic constraints that have been piled over the 48 years of the life of the country which make no sense and that stifle business activity. I intend to privatize 50 companies in this term.

[Makovsky] Can you give us names of companies you would privatize?

[Netanyahu] Fifty companies at least. That is, in my judgment, actually a modest goal out of 160 companies, because I think we have to privatize many, many more. But this is a goal that I am going to set and, of course, to date, the number that has been privatized is a number you can count on the fingers of one hand. That is one area.

All the decisions made will allow us to proceed with privatization, also with the release of public lands (to drive down housing prices) and the setting forth of the new transportation infrastructure for the country.... It seems that no matter how fast we build the roads, the number of cars imported exceeds whatever we build and any changes we put in place. And the only way to overcome that is to see ahead and plan a system of rapid-transport trains which in a small country would make sense.... You could have three or four major business and industrial complexes in Israel and you could disperse the population, reduce the land costs and improve the quality of life....

There is also a need to give a technological education to every child in first grade. Every child. They'd be computer-literate as they learn to read and write, in fact you can even teach the ABC that way. The thing is to get a whole program to educate teachers, and there we can use the Russian immigration; they are particularly suited for this.

[Makovsky] How would it be financed? Would you raise taxes? You cannot put all this money into infrastructure, transportation and education and whatever you want to do with settlements without it coming out somewhere else.

[Netanyahu] We can reduce taxes, and I intend to reduce taxes substantially, but to do that there's no question that we need to reduce parts of the government budget. Now, where is the government budget going?

Now, at least NIS [new Israeli shekels] 10 billion under this government is going to places where I don't intend to put them. They put an additional NIS 6 billion to kibbutzim. Mine will not do that. They put NIS 1.8 billion into Qupat Holim Klalit [Histadrut's sick fund] in addition to what they have given to all the (health funds). They've given NIS 1.1 billion to 'Arafat up to now.

One of the main things we are going to do is deregulate, remove all these elements of public bureaucracy.

[Makovsky] What would you eliminate?

[Netanyahu] Many departments, but you don't fire the people, you just take away the powers from them. So they are there; they still cost money, but there is an attrition level each year of 2 percent, 3 percent, and you just don't hire (more), but you don't fire anyone you don't have to.... Privatization allows you to get in billions of dollars as you are moving the (formerly state-owned firms) into the marketplace. You do the return of land, for example, and (privatize) government companies so you can actually keep yourself level in terms of what's coming in and what's going out, while reducing taxes. This too has been done. When you reduce taxes, it's not clear that you reduce your tax revenue, because you increase the business sector and

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on a lower tax rate you actually harvest a larger tax revenue.

[Makovsky] Ronald Reagan came into office with that supply-side theory of reducing deficits by broadening the tax base, but under his eight-year presidency deficits reached unprecedented heights. Is it not fair to say that the supply-side theory does not work?

[Netanyahu] He raised the defense budget at the same idea, which is not a very good idea. It is a good idea to reduce taxes if you're reducing, or at least not increasing government spending, and if you're privatizing to cover the difference. But it is not a good idea to reduce taxes and raise government spending.

[Makovsky] So you would not raise defense spending?

[Netanyahu] I wouldn't do that. We are going to put into place a program to revolutionize the Israeli economy. That is to really make it leap forth into the 21st century as a free-market economy, with a highly technological educational base. I am not going to privatize all of the defense industries. I'm considering privatizing some of the defense industries, but I'd like to keep the basic (research and development) instruments in our hands, because that, subsidized by the government, turns out to be not only a potent instrument for national defense. It's actually tremendous economically, because it creates the great spin-offs and private companies that help generate high-tech industries.

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Jordan: Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Committee Ends Meetings

JN0805120496 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee concluded two-days of talks here in Amman. The meetings were co-chaired by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and his counterpart Kamal al-Janzuri.

The two sides signed a number of agreements relating to bilateral cooperation. They also issued a final communique defining various issues of cooperation between Jordan and Egypt.

At the end of the sessions, Premiers al-Kabariti and al-Janzuri held a press conference during which they replied to reporters' questions on a number of issues.

The joint committee which opened its meetings yesterday debated minutes of the meeting of its preparatory committee on political coordination between the two countries and economic cooperation. Topics included investment promotion and protection, trade exchanges and stimulating the role of the private sector and the chambers of commerce and industry in both countries. The committee also discussed other recommendations put forth by the preparatory committee, including industrial cooperation, standards and specifications, electric linkage, the exchange of data and expertise, training, renewable energy, oil and gas, maritime environment protection, and other areas of cooperation.

Jordan: Text of Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Communique

JN0805185396 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1157 GMT 8 May 96

[Joint communique issued by the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Committee in Amman on 8 May; read by Muhammad al-Simadi, secretary general of the Jordanian Ministry of Industry and Trade—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee met at the Prime Ministry today under the co-chairmanship of 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, prime minister and head of the Jordanian side of the Joint Committee, and Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, Egyptian prime minister and head of the Egyptian side of the Joint Committee.

At the outset of the committee meetings, which opened yesterday, al-Kabariti welcomed Dr. al-Janzuri and his delegation. He praised the brotherly relations between His Majesty King Husayn and his brother His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. He also hailed the Egyptians' sacrifices to promote Arab causes and defend Arab rights. He said that Jordan has always stood by Egypt's efforts to carry the pan-Arab torch and support the role of Arab institutions in promoting the Arab nation's drive to enjoy security and development and regain the homelands.

In his speech, al-Kabariti explained the constant principles of Jordan's Arab policies, which call for renouncing fragmentation, pooling Arab ranks, and rejecting all forms of terrorism. He also stressed the need for a coherent and integrated Arab political and economic edifice for a constructive cooperation among the countries of the Arab homeland.

Al-Kabariti said that the current Jordanian-Egyptian rapprochement is cause for optimism and that it has become an example for other Arab countries. He noted that both Egypt and Jordan have succeeded in carrying out economic reform programs and restructuring their economic sectors—successes that will be supported by the agreements signed today.

In his speech, al-Janzuri expressed his deep appreciation for the warm reception he and his delegation were accorded. Al-Janzuri reviewed the Middle East peace process since Egypt began its first steps to confront the 30 years of hatred. He said that all aspects of the development march are focused on a just and comprehensive peace based on the restoration of lands to their owners and regaining the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

His excellency said that there is no alternative to maintaining the peace march to achieve development. He stressed the need to support the Arab countries in their efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive peace, regardless of the obstacles and events that hamper these steps.

Al-Janzuri said that Egypt stands by Jordan in its bid to bring about peace in the region, ensure its continuation, and secure the necessary cooperation and cohesion. Al-Janzuri referred to Egypt's rejection of military alliances that will cast doubt on the objectives of the peace process. He also stressed Egypt's objection to the idea of partitioning Iraq and the importance of maintaining Iraq's unity and the security of its territories and the importance of helping it resume its role in achieving stability in the region.

After the local, Arab, and international situations were reviewed, discussions began on aspects of cooperation between the two countries and the importance of joint Arab action to cope with economic developments in the region and Arab relations with the rest of the world.

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At the end of these meetings, the two sides signed the minutes of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee. The minutes include plans for cooperation in various areas. The most important points are as follows:

Regarding political coordination, the two sides asserted that the desired peace should be just and comprehensive, that the peace process should be supported to achieve progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track and to encourage efforts to resume the negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks.

The two sides also stressed their support for the cease-fire in Lebanon and called on the international community to compensate Lebanon for the damage caused to its infrastructure and the losses in both human life and property. The two sides also stressed the need for joint efforts to fight and denounce all forms of terrorism.

They reaffirmed the need to rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction and ensure the achievement of equal [mutasawi] and balanced [mutawazin] security.

They reaffirmed the need to safeguard Iraq's unity and territorial integrity. They also expressed deep concern over the suffering of the Iraqi people and reaffirmed the need to end this suffering. Both sides agreed to continue joint efforts to clear the Arab atmosphere and reinforce Arab solidarity.

A number of agreements was signed to develop economic cooperation between the two countries. These agreements constitute a strong basis to effect a qualitative change in future bilateral economic relations. These agreements are:

1. An agreement to set up a free trade zone to liberalize trade between the two countries through the gradual cancellation of customs duties. In accordance with this agreement, all customs and noncustoms barriers will be removed within 10 years. This agreement represents an advancement in Arab economic relations.

2. An agreement for investment incentives and protection to encourage joint ventures in both countries, in addition to providing full protection for these investments.

3. An agreement to eliminate double taxation and tax evasion between the two countries.

4. An executive program for tourism cooperation.

The committee reviewed the executive program on planning and decided to hold the next joint committee meeting in Amman from 6 to 12 July 1996.

In the fields of industry, specifications, and standardization, both sides agreed to study the establishment of joint industrial projects in mining and industrial production requirements. They also agreed on the need to complete the study on the economic feasibility of potassium sulfate production. The committee reaffirmed the need to unify standard specifications between the two countries and to recognize the certificates of conformity with specifications and trademarks.

In the field of electricity, power, and oil, the committee expressed its satisfaction with the progress of the efforts to link the two countries electricity grids, which is expected to start at the end of next year. The committee decided to continue the talks on supplying Jordan with Egyptian natural gas.

In the field of scientific research, the committee decided to link both countries' seismographic stations and to swiftly exchange accurate information in this field and on the environment. They also decided to undertake a comprehensive survey of the Red Sea shoreline to benefit from satellite information through cooperation with neighborly countries. The committee welcomed the establishment of an Arab center for technical and technological consultation.

In the field of agriculture, the committee called on the competent quarters in both countries to sign an agreement for technical cooperation on animal health and cooperation to combat plant diseases, particularly the Mediterranean fruit fly; conduct joint research; and exchanging information on fruit tree diseases.

In the field of transportation and communications, the committee expressed its satisfaction with the level of existing cooperation between the two countries, particularly with regard to the reciprocal decision to cancel the fuel tax on Jordanian trucks at al-Nuwaybi' port, which began on 1 February 1996. The committee expressed satisfaction with the fast maritime transportation units that have operated between al-Nuwaybi' and al-'Aqabah since 4 May 1996. This has enhanced tourism between the two countries and prompted a number of measures to facilitate movement between the two countries. The committee decided to complete the study on making Egypt a link for telegraph traffic among the Arab countries and to sign an agreement between both countries' postal directorates to organize and develop an electronic mail service.

In the field of health and medicine, the committee decided to hold a meeting of the joint health committee on measures and recommendations to expedite the registration and pricing of medicine between the two countries and to increase trade of medicine.

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In the fields of education and higher education, the two sides agreed to allocate 75 out of the 300 seats allocated to Jordanian students at Egyptian universities for the study of scientific subjects. They agreed to set a date for Jordanian students to apply for higher education and to review these applications before the beginning of university year. They also agreed to expedite the study on certificate equivalency, facilitate the admission of students at both countries' government and private schools, and exempt them from foreigners' fees.

In the field of media and culture, the two sides agreed to lay down a plan for cooperation between both countries' news agencies and to form a joint engineering team to change the temporary link between the Taba and al-'Aqabah television stations to a permanent one and to activate a news and programming exchange between the two countries. The committee also decided to activate the executive program for cultural, scientific, and artistic exchange for the years 1995-1997.

In the field of manpower and consular affairs, the two sides expressed their satisfaction with the measures that have been taken on the entry of workers from both countries after the signing of employment contracts by the Jordanian Labor Ministry and the labor adviser at the Egyptian Embassy in Amman. The two sides agreed to organize employment contracts and the necessary consular measures for Egyptian workers' residence in Jordan in advance.

The meetings were held in an atmosphere of satisfaction with the level of political and economic cooperation and coordination between the two countries.

Jordan: Al-Kabariti, al-Janzuri News Conference

JN0805153996 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1137 GMT 8 May 96

[News conference by Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri with foreign and domestic correspondents in Amman on 8 May—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-RA'Y correspondent Caroline Faraj] Dr. al-Janzuri, my question is a political one about the recent Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon. We noticed that the Egyptian side did not take a forceful stand, as expected, especially since the Lebanese side was completely absent from the negotiations? What do you say to this?

[Al-Janzuri] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Every Arab citizen, whether in or outside the region or in the international arena, knows Egypt is present and is eager to support justice and what is right, not only on the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. This has been the case concerning any Arab issue in the region or outside it since 1948.

The first meeting Rafiq al-Hariri had on the first day of the aggression was with President Mubarak. There has been daily support in the Arab and international arena to stop the bleeding and the aggression against civilians in Lebanon.

Egypt announced its denunciation of this aggression on the very first day. It called for an immediate halt to the aggression and for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 on Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Egypt has nothing to do with Lebanon's presence or absence in the negotiations

[Unidentified correspondent] My question is addressed to his Excellency 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and His Excellency Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri. So far, Jordanian citizens, and perhaps Egyptian citizens, do not know the nature of Jordanian-Egyptian relations. It is obvious that there is agreement in some stages, while others see relations as lukewarm. I would like to ask about your bilateral talks today. I would also like to ask about a specific topic, the Iraqi issue. Is there agreement of views between Jordan and Egypt on Iraq?

[Al-Kabariti] If his excellency permits, first, we must distinguish between interpretations and disagreements that might arise at times on specific issues. But what concerns us, as we have said on more than one occasion, is the strategic approach to things. We believe that the strategic approach and strategic interests govern Jordanian-Egyptian relations. We note with deep satisfaction how Jordanian-Egyptian relations have managed to overcome the disagreements and interpretations that arise from time to time as a result of developments. This happens by relying on the strategic concept, which governs Jordan's positions on various issues, the most important of which is our commitment to the peace issue. Egypt has always been the leader of the peace process and a pioneering party to it. As we have said, we are one of the peacemakers. We and Egypt want this process to continue. We also take care to focus on an important point: that the concept of a just and comprehensive peace should start with the Palestinian cause and that this cause should be settled on the basis of a just and comprehensive solution so that we can say that there is a possibility to attain a just and comprehensive solution. We are very satisfied with our cooperation and with our common approach. I believe that there are vast areas for further development. Thank you.

[Al-Janzuri] I would like to add the following: Egypt is always in the Arab heart, and this makes it incumbent on Egypt to support all the Arabs.

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Egypt has never kept itself away from the Arabs. Even during the 10-year boycott, Egypt did not keep itself away from any Arab cause. In its capacity as the great Arab sister, Egypt's endurance is its destiny. There were no so-called lukewarm relations with any Arab state, even during the phase in which Egypt was assailed.

Regarding the ordeal resulting from the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, I say that any storm will ultimately die down. Egypt did not keep itself away — even from the storm itself. There were no lukewarm relations with any Arab state, particularly Jordan. The Egyptian-Jordanian relationship continues, and there is ongoing bilateral cooperation.

Egypt is currently seeking to close the ranks, as Arabs, to confront what is taking place in the region. Our position, along with that of Jordan, is that we oppose any call to divide Iraq.

Our position—and that of the Arabs, including Jordan—is that there should be a halt to anything that might aggravate the suffering of the Iraqi people. This is the position of both Jordan and Egypt....

[Al-Kabariti, interrupting] We included this position in the joint communique.

[Beirut AL-SHIRA' correspondent Samiyah Dallal] A little while ago, you said that Egypt does not separate itself from the Arab position. After [Egyptian Foreign Minister] 'Amr Musa's recent visit to Ankara, however, Musa downplayed the seriousness of the Turkish-Israeli alliance in the wake of severe Egyptian criticism of this alliance. We heard statements by [Turkish Prime Minister] Mesut Yilmaz threatening Syria and Iraq with regard to water from the Euphrates River. What is the true Egyptian position on this issue?

[Al-Janzuri] Egypt immediately announced its objection to any kind of alliance. This is not Egypt's position today. Over the years, Egypt has objected to any kind of alliance. You may recall that when you were young, Egypt opposed the Baghdad Pact because the country rejects any alliance with parties outside the region.

Egypt supports cooperation and integration among the states in the region or among the Arab states. However, Egypt opposes alliances with parties outside the region. Egypt has declared its position.

Egypt's just position also applies to threats related to water resources. Egypt always stands alongside justice, and it opposes anything that might harm any Arab state.

[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT correspondent Muhammad al-Du'mi] My question to His Excellency Dr. al-Janzuri is: What is the explanation of the recent Egyptian position that was sharply critical of the United States? The second question is: How true are the reports on Egyptian mediation between Jordan and the Palestinian leadership? Thank you.

[Al-Janzuri] I do not want discuss the specific issue you have mentioned. However, when Egypt sees that certain things do not serve peace, it calls the attention to the remarks that do not serve the cause of peace. As I said yesterday and repeat today, Egypt is completely aware of the meaning and benefits of peace.

When Egypt joined the cause of peace in 1978, it was in our interest to learn that after the wars from 1948 to 1973, and after we were victorious in 1973, we could only achieve development for our people — in the sense of finding a place to grow crops, a place to build a factory, and a place where our sons can work — by establishing peace.

Who would lead the ranks after 30 years of hatred as a result of successive wars? Sacrifices had to be made in order to proceed with the peace process. Egypt took most of the blame from everyone in the region who had the right to blame it. It was impossible to uproot hatred overnight.

However, Egypt had foresight, because peace had to start with one of the Arab states, and that state was Egypt. This situation lasted 15 years, from 1978 to 1992, when the Madrid conference convened, at which time some Arab states sat at the table and talked about peace.

Therefore, when someone deviates from the path that we started, after all the suffering we have been through in the peace process — which is no less arduous than war — and when we see those who make a statement here or a remark there that harms peace, we tell them that this does not help peace. Whether these statements are made in the United States, Europe, or any state in the world, Egypt will always say that this harms peace.

With respect to the issue rapprochement, or Jordanian-Palestinian relations, perhaps his excellency the prime minister would like to comment on that.

[Al-Kabariti] Thank you, Your Excellency. I do not believe that there are any differences between Jordan and the PLO or the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] that might call for Egyptian mediation. However, there is certainly a need for more coordination, cooperation, and consultation among the parties involved in the Egyptian-Palestinian-Jordanian equation in order to help the Palestinian side in the final-status negotiations.

As I said at the beginning of this meeting, we are genuinely concerned with helping the peace process between the PLO, the PNA, and Israel reach its logical conclusion: namely, resolving the Palestinian question.

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It was the Palestinian issue that governed the Arab-Israeli conflict in the first place. There can never be a comprehensive and just solution without the resolution of this question.

[Al-Janzuri] To add to what his excellency the prime minister said, I would like to say that the meeting that is expected to be bilateral today and might be trilateral soon, the meeting that will be attended by President Mubarak, his majesty the king, and President Yasir 'Arafat should not be viewed as mediation or a unification of opinions. The message that needs to be conveyed to this region and to other regions is that, for the past 50 years, the basic issue has been the Palestinian question. Sitting together at a tripartite summit asserts that the issue being proposed, and that has been proposed over the past several years, is the Palestinian question.

[Cairo AL-SIYASI AL-MASRI correspondent Nauris Ahmad] A question for his excellency the Jordanian prime minister. What is the Jordanian perspective on future regional developments with regard to the final-status negotiations on the Palestinian question, and what is your perspective of the developments on the Syrian track?

[Al-Kabariti] I believe that the issues that will be discussed at the final-status negotiations are going to be difficult and arduous, and the time allocated for these negotiations is quite long. We hope that coordinating efforts, as well as Arab and international support for the Palestinian negotiator, will help shorten the time span and surmount the obstacles in order to arrive soon at an agreement through which the PNA can move from the status quo to the phase of establishing a state with Jerusalem as its capital. At that point, we will be able to resolve the main and basic problem: the issue of refugees.

With respect to the Syrian-Israeli track, I think that the agreement concluded after the Israeli aggression against Lebanon is an agreement that — in the minds of its signatories — will lay the groundwork for the phase that may follow the Israeli elections. We hope that all parties will commit themselves to peaceful options. Thank you.

[Correspondent] Regarding the question of Iraq and the positions stated in the communique, does this mean that Egypt supports Jordan's public call for change in Iraq? The second part of the question is: We often hear that the Iraqi people's suffering should be alleviated. What is the opinion of the two states on this?

[Al-Janzuri] First of all, regarding the Iraqi regime, this is an internal issue in which neither we nor any other Arab state should interfere. However, when it comes to the suffering of the people, we call for a Security Council decision allowing Iraq to export what it can to meet the demands of the Iraqi people. No doubt, we support this so that the needs of the Iraqi people can be met. As for the regime, this is something that should be left alone. No country has the right to even think about interfering.

[Correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab] A question for Prime Minister al-Kabariti: With regard to his majesty the king's recent visit to France, can we say that Europe and France will play a prominent role in future events in the region?

[Al-Kabariti] As a matter of fact, we, along with fraternal Egypt, see a need for Europe to play a principal and important role in the regional peace process. We do not want to see Europe's role confined to the economic domain. When we, Egypt and Jordan, participated in the Barcelona conference, we believed that this conference would lay the groundwork for an ongoing process that would produce a partnership arrangement between the northern and southern Mediterranean basin. If we are planning to reach a partnership arrangement with Europe, we definitely want to see Europe play a highly important role in building and forging the region's future, which we hope will be based on security and stability, because this will serve the interests of all the countries in the region, including Europe.

[Correspondent] A question to Dr. al-Janzuri on recent events in Lebanon. You said yesterday that recent events in Lebanon have fueled hatred. Do you believe that the cease-fire agreement protects Lebanon's sovereignty? Moreover, do you believe that Lebanon was a victim of international rivalry? Thanks.

[Al-Janzuri] The agreement that halted the aggression and the fall of more victims from the ranks of the Lebanese people is something that we certainly welcomed. It was our hope that the fighting would end on the first day, rather than the 17th day. As a politician, I would like to say that peace is coming, regardless of the difficulties entailed and regardless of the many attempts to abort it. Peace will promote the development efforts of all the countries in the region. The entire region stands to benefit from peace.

I would like to repeat that, despite the efforts to halt the peace process, no single country would be harmed by peace. Peace will benefit all countries, including Israel. It might take some time to achieve peace because of the attempts by some parties to create difficulties. When we talk about peace, we mean a just and comprehensive peace. We are not talking about an Israeli peace, as some are saying, but a just and comprehensive Arab-

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Israeli peace. As I have just said, this peace will come, no matter how long it takes. Thank you.

[Egypt Television correspondent Khalid Khayri] A question to Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri: The signing of these agreements today reflects the deep Egyptian-Jordanian ties, as well as the desire to promote bilateral cooperation. What are your expectations for these ties, against the background of the signing of these accords today?

[Al-Kabariti] At the final session today, we said that there are great prospects for enhancing and promoting bilateral ties. We also said that we do not want to play down the specialness of the ties that exist between us. We want our future bilateral ties to be based on solidarity and complementarity. We always seek to see Egypt assume the leading role for which greater Egypt has always been known. Given its history, weight, and leverage, Egypt is qualified to play such a role. I have told the Egyptian prime minister that the political and economic weight cannot be ignored. But I added that Egypt also has great and effective moral leverage on both the Arab and international scenes. We are directly concerned with promoting and enhancing ties and coordination with the Egyptian side.

[Khayri] Dr. al-Janzuri: What do you have to say to answer this question?

[Al-Janzuri] We signed four written agreements today, but what Prime Minister al-Kabariti has just said constitutes an oral agreement of which I approve. [laughter]

[Khayri] Thank you, sir.

Jordan: King, PRC Vice-Premier Discuss Bilateral Ties, Cooperation

JN0905180196 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Bangguo and his accompanying delegation at the Royal Hashemite Court today. Bangguo conveyed to his majesty the greetings of his excellency the Chinese president and appreciation of his majesty.

The two sides reviewed relations between the two countries and horizons of cooperation for the benefit of the two countries' peoples.

The audience was attended by 'Awn al-Khasawinah, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; Interior Minister 'Awad Khulayfat; and Engineer 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib, minister of industry and trade.

Jordan: PRC To Provide $6.5 Million Loan

JN0905204096 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 9 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video; from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A Chinese high-level delegation held talks with Jordanian officials on economic and trade issues. The delegation, headed by China's Deputy President of the State Council Wu Bangguo, had a meeting with his majesty the king. The meeting focused on cooperation issues between the two countries.

His royal highness the crown prince said, during his meeting with the Chinese delegation, that he believed the nations of East and West Asia should reach a formula for cooperation. His highness said China and Jordan should work to develop their economic and political relations and activate trade between the two countries.

The Chinese delegation later held talks with cabinet ministers on economic, cultural, and technical issues. The ministers of interior, planning, trade, and industry and health took part in the meeting. The Chinese delegation offered Jordan a $6.5 million to finance Jordanian imports from China. It also asked to import potassium from Jordan, which would amend the trade balance between the two countries. The delegation offered to provide Jordan with interest-free loans.

During the meeting, China's deputy foreign minister signed an agreement with Planning Minister Mrs. Rima Khalaf, involving Chinese financing to a number of unspecified projects in Jordan.

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Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Discusses Israeli Attacks, Peace, Qana

NC0905180196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 9 May 96

[Speech by President Ilyas al-Hirawi at the 31st International Medical Conference at the American University of Beirut on 9 May—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Before peace, during peace, and after peace Lebanon is a homeland. Lebanon refuses to be dealt with as if it were a commodity or small change. We support a fair and comprehensive peace. This is our decision; we will not budge from it—whatever the maneuvers, temptation, or pressure. We are not delaying this peace; we want to liberate our land. But we are not in a hurry for peace at the expense of rights and dignity. We reject the continuation of the status quo, because it is against peace and violates international legitimacy.

Lebanon did not violate anyone's territory and it never dominated anyone. So I ask you: What is Lebanon's crime? He who dares to tamper with Lebanon's blood will get bogged down in Lebanon's blood. This was proved during the recent ordeal we encountered. [applause]

Conferees: Peace cannot be achieved by one party or by two parties, one of which can attack without being punished, while the other cannot hold on to its land and its right to life and dignity. [passage omitted]

Man cannot develop his technology and laboratories, leaving Israel to use Lebanese territory as a testing ground for the most lethal weapons. [applause]. How can mankind make such great strides in discovery and invention while leaving politics and its applications to be governed by suppositional and circumstantial restrictions? Let policy be governed by conscience. How can we boast at the end of the 20th century about openness to scientific progress while the application of international law is sometimes governed by bias. We regret this. Medicine is not helpless before disease; it seeks to find a remedy. Politics, like medicine, must support right.

The recent ordeal aimed at halting the process of reconstruction in Lebanon. We must acknowledge this. The recent ordeal aimed at obstructing Lebanon's role as a meeting place between East and West. We will not elaborate on what happened against Lebanon last month. Talk about pain does not end it. We appeal to the world to back Lebanon in its construction program. The construction of Lebanon is a boost for a fair and comprehensive peace. The destruction of Lebanon is the destruction of peace in this region. Does peace mean they give us the choice: Destroy our homeland or let our homeland be dragged into self-destruction? Is this what they want? Why all the beating about the bush? Let Israel withdraw from our territory and the Lebanese Government will guarantee security in the south. I said this in 1991 at the UN forum and reiterated it during my latest trip there. I reiterate it today.

Conferees: Peace cannot grow by making the people resent it through the fiercest aggression against Lebanon. Peace cannot grow by flouting the UN resolution. Peace cannot grow by sitting at the negotiating table while rights and laws are violated. Honest and accurate implementation of the April understanding is a test of Israel's intentions and respect for international will. Israel had better refrain from crimes that defame it instead of getting angry with the United Nations for bashfully uncovering some of what Israel committed against Lebanon, international legitimacy, mankind, and the world's conscience.

Conferees: Tell your countrymen that Lebanon's battle is not domestic. Our battle is to safeguard our entity, sovereignty, and independence. Our battle is to respect international legitimacy. The earthquake that was the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the Lebanese people in the south and western al-Biqa' failed to affect the pillars of our country. The most important of these are that national unity remained strong. Security and stability in Lebanon remained firm. Confidence in Lebanon's status on every level and international support for Lebanon remained strong. Conferees: They wanted Lebanon to be a homeland of victims. Tell your countrymen that Lebanon is a homeland of life and construction. He who supports Lebanon supports peace and he who does not support Lebanon does not support right. Conferees and Guests: Lebanon extends its hand to everyone to build a rightful and true peace. Long live peace, long live Lebanon, and long live the American University of Beirut. [applause]

Lebanon: Cabinet Views UN Report on Qana Attack

NC0905183096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At its ordinary meeting in Government House, al-Sana'i', tonight under Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, the Cabinet discussed the UN report on the Qana massacre, which the Israeli enemy committed at the headquarters of the Fijian contingent of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. The Cabinet decided that despite observations on its content, the report once more showed Israel's bestiality and its targeting of civilians and children. The report enhanced Lebanon's position, exposing Israel's aggressive intentions.

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The Cabinet was briefed by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri on the contacts made to implement the April understanding and on the invitation to the first meeting of countries participating in the monitoring group in Washington tomorrow to work out a blueprint for its work. Al-Hariri notified the Cabinet that he will visit Brussels next week to participate in the EU foreign ministers meeting on the European contribution to the reconstruction of Lebanon.

Lebanon: Junblatt Comments on Israel, Syria, Hizballah

MM0905151396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 9 May 96 p 5

[Interview with Walid Junblatt, Lebanese minister of refugee affairs and leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, by unidentified correspondent in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you believe that the Israeli attacks on Lebanon were aimed at achieving Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' electoral interests, or were there other concealed dimensions?

[Junblatt] Maybe the direct reason behind the attacks was Peres' electoral interests. But if we look at the strategic, military, and security dimensions, we will find that no Israel ruler has ever obtained from a U.S. ruler what the Israeli entity, especially the Israeli military, has obtained from the United States this time.

It has acquired a lot of advanced technology in addition to promises of "a supercomputer" and the laser weapon, which will be the weapon of the future. This weapon could be banned because it is more dangerous than chemical weapons. Besides, Peres' statement after his meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton, namely, "we are now bankrupt," means that the Israelis have no more demands, that is, they have acquired all they wanted. I ask here: Who is ruling Israel? The army. What I am trying to say is that we should not attach great importance to Peres or Netanyahu. The army's interests are the basis of everything, and the Israeli army is a forward base whose task is to strike the heart of the Arab homeland.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Did Peres not win the battle?

[Junblatt] It is all now to do with who can kill more Arabs or Muslims in order to win. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What has Lebanon achieved after the Israeli strike?

[Junblatt] What has changed? Nothing. What Lebanon has gained is the formation of the military-security committee with Syria's participation. That is, there is now a guarantee and Syrian participation, when there had been a prevalent view among some official Lebanese circles to the effect that a Lebanese-Israeli committee should be formed without Syria. But the new committee has come to confirm and prove the unity of the Syria-Lebanese track. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is the nature of the relationship between you and Hizballah?

[Junblatt] Hizballah is an influential political and cultural force on the Lebanese scene. It has taken up the task of resisting the Israeli occupation in the south and in western al-Biqa'. Naturally — and proceeding from our national, pan-Arab, and liberationist principles — we agree with it. Because resistance is a legitimate right, politically and legally, against the Israeli occupation, which is committing crimes and terrorism and ignoring all international and humanitarian laws. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: More on Cease-Fire Group Meeting Plans; Speculation on Base

NC0905203396 Paris AFP in English 2010 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, May 9 (AFP)—US President Bill Clinton has telephoned Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri ahead of a meeting in Washington of a Lebanon ceasefire watchdog group, amid reports Thursday [9 May] the group could be based in Lebanon or Cyprus.

The state-run national news agency ANI [NNA, National News Agency] said only that the talks late Wednesday "focused on bilateral relations between the two countries and ways of improving them."

Sources close to al-Hariri, quoted by the Beirut press Thursday, declined to elaborate on the nature of the talks but did not deny that they focused on Friday's meeting in Washington. A five-nation ceasefire committee was created under a truce ending a 17-day war in April between Israel and the Iranian-backed Hizballah in Lebanon. It comprises France, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and the United States.

Washington has invited the ambassadors of France, Israel, Lebanon and Syria to the meeting, which will be chaired by US special coordinator for the Middle East Dennis Ross. The US State Department has acknowledged differences among the nations in the ceasefire monitoring group over how it would function, while

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press reports in Beirut spoke of differences over where it would meet.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said Thursday that the group should be based in al-Naqurah, a south Lebanon town on the international border with Israel. "We have asked that the monitoring group be based in al-Naqurah," Buwayz told reporters.

Asked about reports that the group could be based in the neighbouring Mediterranean island of Cyprus, Buwayz said "no one has made a proposition like that to me." The pro-Syrian AL-SAFIR newspaper, in a dispatch from Washington, said Beirut "informed the United States that if al-Naqurah was rejected, Lebanon has no objection in having the headquarters" in Cyprus.

AL-SAFIR published what it said was the text of Lebanese proposals for the formation of the group, stating that "the group will have its headquarters in al-Naqurah," where peacekeepers of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) also have their headquarters. The group would also have branches in Tyre and Nahariyah, the report said, referring to the south Lebanon port and a town in northern Israel respectively.

According to the report, French, Syrian, Lebanese and US representatives would attend meetings in Tyre, while French, Israeli and US representatives would attend those in Nahariyah.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said Wednesday: "We may not have a final agreement among the countries on Friday." But he suggested that the group will be up and running in the near future.

Lebanon: Israelis Reportedly Pound South Areas

NC0905192696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli acts of aggression against peaceful towns and villages in south Lebanon and Western al-Biqa' have continued. At 2000 today the Israeli forces located in Tallat Zaghlah and Abu Qamhah in the occupied border strip pounded the Jabal al-Dahr Heights and Mazra'at Lusi in Western al-Biqa' with mortar fire. As of 2120 enemy tanks in the al-Qusayr area have been bombarding the outskirts of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharibyah with 105-mm rounds.

Lebanon: Israel Shells Hizballah Positions Following Bomb Attack

NC0905202296 Paris AFP in English 2005 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rashayya, Lebanon, May 9 (AFP) — The Israeli army shelled Hizballah guerrilla positions Thursday [9 May] in the border zone it occupies in south Lebanon, without causing any casualties, police said.

The shelling came hours after two pro-Israeli militiamen were wounded in a bomb attack claimed by Hizballah, becoming the first casualties since a truce went into effect in Lebanon last month.

"The Israeli artillery fired 18 shells at Birkat Jabbur and Wadi Abu Qamhah, in ravines and hillsides where Hizballah fighter are positioned," a Lebanese police spokesman told AFP.

Israel's client militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), said the bomb went off in al-Dabshah in the central sector of the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in south Lebanon, while militiamen were on patrol duty. Two militiamen were hurt in the attack which was accompanied by shelling on the al-Dabshah position, the SLA said.

A spokesman for the Iranian-backed Hizballah in Beirut claimed responsibility for the attack. The incident is not a violation of the US-brokered ceasefire which went into effect on April 27, ending a 16-day war between Israel and Hizballah which the Jewish state launched April 11 to stop Hizballah Katyusha attacks on its northern territory. Under the accord Israel and Hizballah agreed not to fire from or at civilian areas.

Lebanon: Nasrallah Interviewed on Recent Incidents

NC0905084296 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 16

[FBIS Translated Text] Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, secretary-general of the Lebanese Hizballah, said in an interview with a KEYHAN correspondent in Damascus that the Zionist enemy was unable to achieve its objective. Israel's allegation that Hizballah bases and centers were bombed and that Hizballah mujahidin were killed are outright lies, and the fact that Hizballah enjoys extensive popularity and influence has been proven.

He added: We decisively state that the Zionist enemy was unable to inflict even one blow on Hizballah or on its military resistance.

In answer to a question on his assessment of the American plan for a cease fire, Nasrallah said: The

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Americans put forth a plan from the very first day. But this was actually an effort to impose Israel's demands on Lebanon and to politically exploit the Zionists' military operations. From the very first moment we stated our opposition with the American plan because it was hypocritical and granted the Israelis the right to kill, destroy, and cause bloodshed, while ignoring our right to resist. Moreover, the Americans want to interfere in regional affairs and they show a great deal of sensitivity toward efforts by others. This was seen in their reaction to efforts by France, Europe, and Russia.

Nasrallah said: America never strived to halt the battles. What it is trying to do is to create a political and operational situation that is to Shim'on Peres' benefit. This is because what is important for America is Peres' victory in the elections and not halting the bloodshed....

In answer to the question of what Arab leaders have gained through their efforts to normalize their relations with the Zionist enemy, the Hizballah secretary-general said:

You should ask them this question. However, the only thing that they have achieved is to disgrace themselves and to ignore the enemies' massacres.

I think what is happening in Lebanon has placed the Arab regimes in front of a bottleneck, even though some of them have reached a point where they feel no shame. Now, with the Lebanese incidents, they see themselves facing the heightening rage of their nations.

Hizballah Secretary-General Nasrallah stated that the "Grapes of Wrath" operation which Israel started on 11 April has been defeated both politically and militarily. AFP reports that speaking at a news conference in the southern Shiite suburb of Beirut, Nasrallah said: Israel wanted to inflict a drastic blow on the Islamic resistance in order to disarm it and to silence the Katyushas. But despite all the technologies that it has at its disposal, it was unable to hit even one of our Katyusha missile launchers, and I call on Shim'on Peres (the Zionist prime minister) to show us the picture of even one Katyusha launcher that has been destroyed. This is proof of his military defeat.

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Syria: Al-Shar', DPRK Foreign Minister Hold 'Official' Talks

JN0905175796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A round of official talks was held between Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Kim Yong-nam, DPRK deputy chairman of the executive council of ministers [title as heard] and foreign minister, at the Foreign Ministry this morning. [passage omitted]

Talks centered on the current international situation, the latest Israeli aggression against Lebanon, and ways to support and develop the Nonaligned Movement.

This session of talks was preceded by a closed meeting between the two ministers, focussing on bilateral relations and issues of mutual concern.

Syria: Vice President Khaddam Receives DPRK Foreign Minister

JN0905181096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1330 today Kim Yong-nam, DPRK deputy chairman of the executive council [title as heard] and minister of foreign affairs, and the accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by DPRK Ambassador in Damascus Chong Chun-kun. The two sides discussed the international situation, the situation in the Korean Peninsula and the Middle East, and bilateral relations.

Syria: Radio—Peace Cannnot Be Achieved by U.S. Bias Toward Israel

JN0905172696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 9 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The investigation carried out by the United Nations regarding the Qana massacre proves that Israel is responsible for the massacre and that it perpetrated it deliberately. Israel attacked the United Nations soon after the report was published. Indeed, it threatened that this report would reflect on Israel's relations with the UN forces in Lebanon.

Of course, such action is expected from Israel. It is inconceivable that the aggressor admits that he carried out an aggression. Of course, Israel is not expected to admit that its aggression was a massacre and that it constitutes state terrorism carried out by a regular army against unarmed people. It is also inconceivable that Israel admits that the massacre it carried out in Qana should be entered into the war crimes files.

Israel's attack on the UN report was expected. However, such an attack by the U.S. delegation to the United Nations was a surprise or rather a shock to observers and to all those concerned about realizing peace in the region and about humanitarian dealings in times of war, especially toward nonfighting civilians. It is regrettable that the spokesman for the U.S. representative to the UN Security Council cast doubts on the truth behind the report's findings. He called for drawing conclusions — as he put it — given that the main conclusion that should be drawn from the report is that political protection of Israeli terrorism and massacres should be stopped and that putting Israel above international law should also be stopped. Furthermore, Israel should be deterred and forced to admit its responsibility for these crimes. Moreover, guarantees should be drawn up to prevent Israel from repeating such war crimes and terrorism.

It is true that Syria doubts Israel's peace intentions. This is not a secret, neither is it an accusation. Otherwise, what is the meaning behind Israel's wasting of five years of the peace process whether in prevaricating over procedural issues or in fruitless and unnecessary arguments over the nature of peace, the scope of withdrawal, or seeking peace for peace instead of land for peace? This is in addition to Israel's fabrication of unnecessary obstacles when it comes to the venue of negotiations or upgrading the level of negotiators. After one thing or another, Israel either turns logic upside down or puts the cart before the horse by discussing the results of peace before peace itself is achieved. Then comes its exposed game of evading the requirements of peace through the game of early elections, which Israel is due to hold for the second time at the end of this month. In these elections, the rival blocs in Israel are imbuing the Israeli voters with all instincts of aggression, racism, violence, and expansionism, and are making them adopt a supercilious attitude toward others. This is instead of preparing them to accept right and respect the international community's resolutions; that is, preparing them for peace.

Israel consumed five years, during which it even tampered with the concept of peace itself and not just the peace process. Should the world wait another five years before Israel does or perhaps does not announce its commitment to the international community's resolutions that commit the Israeli occupiers to withdraw from southern Lebanon and the occupied Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines? Indeed, Syria doubts Israel's peace intentions. This is not a secret, nor is it an accusation. President Hafiz al-Asad announced before the world that Israel has not yet made up its mind to make peace its strategic option.

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The U.S. side believes that Syria's legitimate doubts about Israel's intentions is an accusation. However, this belief does not suit the U.S. position toward the peace process, since the United States is supposed to be an honest full partner in this process.

Peace cannot be achieved through U.S. bias toward Israel — the occupier of Syrian, Lebanese, and other territories. It can only be achieved through neutrality and upholding right. Within this context, a meeting is supposed to be held in Washington tomorrow, Friday [10 May], for the monitoring group stemming from the April agreement, which led to a cease-fire, and, indeed, ended the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon. We understand that the duty of this monitoring committee is to monitor the cease-fire and nothing else, and that this agreement is not an alternative to the peace process. Peace in southern Lebanon has its own well-known terms of reference; that is, UN Security Council Resolution 425 — which stipulates Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon — especially since Israeli officials are claiming each day that Israel has no ambitions in Lebanese territories. If this withdrawal is realized, then the need for this monitoring committee will no longer be valid because peace guarantees the security of all parties.

Syria: Press on Cease-Fire Committee Meeting, U.S. 'Bias'

JN1005072596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0458 GMT 10 May 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today, AL-BA'TH comments on the meeting of the southern Lebanon cease-fire supervision committee. The paper notes that before the committee's first meeting, Israeli leaders made negative statements threatening the UN troops in southern Lebanon. The paper says: The deceptive Israeli efforts focus on diverting the cease-fire supervision committee from its course. Meanwhile, Israeli diplomats are preparing to reshuffle their many cards to create circumstances or stands that will make the situation more complicated.

Prior to the meeting of the supervision committee, Israel threatened the United Nations, while the United States — the peace sponsor, the guardian of world peace, and the defender of human rights — moved ahead of the meeting with acts inharmonious with its role as a sponsor and mediator. In this regard, the paper cites the current talks in Washington on a U.S.-Israeli military cooperation agreement, which will pose a major challenge to the Arabs.

AL-BA'TH says: Syria successfully created an atmosphere unexpected by Israel during its aggression against Lebanon. Likewise, Syria has the ability to overcome many of the deliberate attempts to complicate the work of the supervision committee and distract the committee from its tasks. The Israeli leaders have acted with Nazi arrogance and a haughty aggressive mentality. Syria always knows how to make its firmness and confidence about its stands an impregnable wall against suspicious and vile intentions. Such intentions will not push Syria into the Israeli-designed situation. Instead, Syria will move forward to invigorate the supervision committee and help it play its necessary role in creating a situation that serves, rather than obstructs, peace.

On the same subject, AL-THAWRAH comments in one of its articles on the UN report that condemns Israel and confirms that the shelling of UN troops and a UN center packed with children, women, and old people was deliberate and premeditated. The paper says: This report foils any attempt to shirk responsibility and refutes the bulk of Israel's deceptive allegations. It exposes all the hypocritical claims and any procedural, topographic, and technical allegations.

AL-THAWRAH says that the U.S. Administration used all its political and military weight in an attempt to absorb Arab and international indignation, and even the indignation of the average U.S. citizens. The U.S. Administration sought to turn the defeat and abysmal failure of the aggression and the crazy 16-day war against Lebanon in favor of Peres and his election campaign. Thus, losing his self-control, the head of U.S. diplomacy, in attempt to cover up the failure, leveled arbitrary charges. Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department issued a report that coincided with the end of the aggression and Peres' visit to Washington. The report was full of lies, charges, and it attempts to clear Israel of the terrorism charges and to affix them to others.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Such arrogance toward the United Nations and the Israeli threat to UN troops in southern Lebanon require a firm international response that cuts Israel down to its normal size, curbs its aggressiveness, and sends its politicians and generals to court for the war crimes they have committed against Lebanon and the Arab nation.

In another article, AL-THAWRAH comments on the fragility of the separate agreements and their adverse effects on the peace process. It says: A quick reading of the progress of the peace process since the issuance of Resolution 242 and Resolution 338, followed by the Geneva conference of 1974 and then the Madrid conference, shows that this process has failed to make any

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headway because of Israel's obstruction and rejection of the bases of peace, which are represented by full Israeli withdrawal and the restoration of the Palestinian people's national legitimate rights.

AL-THAWRAH refers to Israel's hostile wars, the latest of which is the brutal aggression against Lebanon last month. During this aggression, Israel committed the crime of the Qana massacre, which terrified the world. The paper says the massacre pushed the peace process off course, something that prompted the entire world to demand a return to the bases of peace from which the Madrid conference proceeded in order to establish a just, comprehensive peace on the basis of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle.

AL-THAWRAH notes the irony of Washington's flagrant bias toward the Israeli aggressor, since Washington itself is a sponsor of the Madrid peace process. AL-THAWRAH wonders: How will the United States accommodate this exposed bias in its role as a fair, honest mediator and partner in the peace process? We hope that the United States will keep its pledges toward the peace process and that it will work to implement the land-for-peace initiative and the UN resolutions so it does not lose its credibility as a superpower with heavy responsibilities toward peace.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Opposition Reports Pakistan Plans To Open Embassy in Kabul

LD0905160896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan is planning to open its embassy in Kabul as soon as possible.

According to foreign agency reports, as a result of talks between the Kabul administration and Pakistan, the ground has been prepared for peace and security in Afghanistan. It is also most likely that Pakistan will reopen its embassy in Kabul.

The reports add that both sides have discussed and expressed hope for (?building) a communication and commercial road linking Afghanistan with the Central Asian countries.

It has been reported that the talks between Kabul's delegation and Pakistan's Government were conducted in Islamabad in a friendly atmosphere and both sides are now waiting for the positive results of the talks.

Afghanistan: Commentary Criticizes Former President Mojaddedi

LD0905225196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 9 May 96

[Unattributed Commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] [passage indistinct] In his interview Hazrat Saheb [title of Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, chairman of High Coordination Council and ex-president of Afghanistan] also said that the communists are members of the Taleban group. Hazrat Saheb should now ask how a group which has communists among its members, calls the jihadi groups rebels, assassinates the leader of the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party], and is waiting impatiently to prosecute General Dostam, can participate in a broad-based government together with the jihadi factions.

If Hazrat Saheb had waited a little while and realistically assessed the situation, he could easily have realized that the chances of setting up a government with the participation of the Taleban, General Dostam and the jihadi groups were very small. The Taleban group does not want to see the jihadi parties in the type of government Hazrat Saheb was suggesting, and they want General Dostam to be prosecuted. The Kabul administration does not want the Taleban group and cannot tolerate the policy of Mola Omar, Rabbani and other leaders of the Taleban group, even for one day. Under such circumstances we do not know with whom Hazrat Saheb can build his broad-based government. On the one hand Hazrat Saheb rejects the Taleban and, on the other hand, he considers their participation to be necessary in the broad-based government.

Two points can be noted from the contradictory and hasty statements of Hazrat Saheb:

First, on the one hand Hazrat Saheb approves of all groups, including the Taleban and that led by Dostam, in a broad-based front. But, on the other hand, he personally does not approve of the leaders of some of the groups. Obviously, in suggesting the setting up of a broad-based government in which all groups can take part, Hazrat Saheb's objective is to be given the presidency of this broad-based government.

If Hazrat Saheb does not want to see some of the group leaders in this provisional government it is because if the presidency of such a provisional government is given to someone other than himself, he will not be able to tolerate it even for one day.

In having spiritual qualities, experience, seniority and knowledge, Hazrat Saheb has the necessary qualifications to become president of the country, especially considering that he has twice been chosen for this post. However, Hazrat Saheb needs to realize the fact that a presidency cannot be run without military backing. Having military forces in the present situation is impossible. Because the country's presidency is a duty that can be allotted to a person chosen by the people, the president must be a person who enjoys the people's trust and faith, in order to discharge such a responsibility and to fulfill the people's aspirations.

If today certain jihadi leaders claim the country's presidency, each one of them enjoys, to some degree, the support of the Afghan people, and each of them has a military force. We must recall the situation four years ago, when Hazrat Saheb was appointed president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan for two months in accordance with a decision taken at Government House in Peshawar. At the end of the two months, Hazrat Saheb intended to extend the term of his presidency and attempted to convene a Loya Jerga for this purpose. But Hazrat Saheb was not given an hour-long chance to retain the position of presidency. His decrees were not allowed to be broadcast by Radio Kabul, and even his plane was [?attacked]. If Hazrat Saheb had enjoyed the people's support and been backed by a military force, he could have extended his term of office for at least four years like Ustad Rabbani, who succeeded in doing this by force. Hazrat Saheb, however, did not have a military force, and was easily expelled from the Arg Palace and sent to Peshawar.

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Hazrat Saheb must keep these facts in mind. From his vast experience of life, he must seek a rational way to resolve the current crisis in the country.

Those who refused to hold talks with the High Coordination Council [HCC] called everyone rebels, killed the leader of the Hezb- e Wahdat-e Eslami, and now seek the prosecution of General Dostam and others. Setting up a government with their participation means [passage indistinct].

Now that the leaders of the Kabul administration have repented of their past actions and have held out the hand of friendship and fraternity to the HCC, the heads of the HCC, being aware of the nature of conspiracies, should join together and use the method of forgiving and forgetting in order to save the jihad [against the Russians] from defamation. They should start by forming a small union and then inviting others to join this union.

Second, this is the only way to resolve the country's crisis. If today we recall the past actions of this or that faction, no leader or faction, including the Taleban, Dostam, Hazrat Saheb, or Ustad Rabbani, can dispel the fear of their past actions. Each one of them has carried out such actions in the past as could be argued about for years. But this would not resolve the problem and the nation, as before, would live in fear and destitution.

Let us come and abandon selfishness and bullying and choose instead the line of fraternity and forgiveness. Yes, only by choosing such a line can our problem be resolved and our people become happy. God willing.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Government To Deploy Armed Forces During Elections

BK0905162096 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A high-level special meeting held in Dhaka today decided to deploy the Armed Forces during the forthcoming parliamentary elections to assist the civil administration in maintaining law and order. The meeting was presided over by Chief Adviser Mohammad Habibur Rahman. He said the Armed Forces, which are always ready to protect the independence of the motherland, will stand by their civilian brothers so that elections will be conducted peacefully. He said the law enforcing agencies will take all necessary steps to maintain law and order to ensure free and fair elections.

The special meeting held detailed discussions on various aspects of the law and order situation for the forthcoming elections and also on the deployment of the Armed Forces and other law enforcing agencies. The chief adviser expressed satisfaction over the improvement in law and order in the country since becoming the present caretaker government. He expressed his thanks to all concerned for their cooperation in this important task.

In this connection, he said efforts will continue to further improve the situation. He emphasized the need to intensify the countrywide drive to recover illegal arms. Members of the advisory council, secretary of the Cabinet Division, chiefs of the three services, secretaries of the concerned ministries, and senior officials of the law enforcing agencies attended the meeting.

Bangladesh: Awami League Wajed Seeks Forgiveness for Past Mistakes

BK1005081496 Hong Kong AFP in English 0747 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, May 10 (AFP) — The head of Bangladesh's Awami League, which brought down the government and forced new elections, asked voters to forgive any past mistakes Friday [10 May] and pledged an anti-corruption campaign if the party wins June 12 elections.

"I appeal to Bangladeshis to forgive the Awami League if it had committed any mistakes in the past and help us lead the nation on the basis of national consensus," Sheikh Hasina Wajed told reporters while announcing the party's election manifesto.

The Awami League's 21-point platform pledges a disciplined administration free from corruption.

"We will launch a crusade against corruption along with the people and take steps according to the laws of the land against those who have or will resort to looting national wealth," she said.

The platform also pledged a foreign policy based on "friendship to all and malice to none."

The Awami League led a two-year campaign that forced former prime minister Khaleda Zia to resign and hand over power to a neutral caretaker government in March. The campaign included a boycott of parliament by opposition MPs and numerous strikes and street demonstrations.

Wajed accused Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party of widespread corruption and of shattering the economy.

In its manifesto, the party pledged continued support for a free-market economy, vowing it would not nationalise any private industry or institutions. It also said it would bring women into the mainstream of the counrty's development efforts.

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"We will give absolute freedom to the press and privatise state run newspapers as well as give full autonomy to the state run television, radio and news agency," Wajed said.

Bangladesh's caretaker government of Muhammad Habibur Rahman said earlier more than 100,000 armed forces personnel would be deployed for the parliamentary elections.

"The very presence of the Armed Forces will create a healthy atmosphere," he said. The military has been deployed twice since 1991 to monitor elections.

Zia, who launched her polls campaign Thursday, is scheduled to announce the BNP manifesto late Friday.

India

India: Rao Meets President, To Resign on 10 May

BK0905161396 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1605 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Here is a flash: The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, met the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, a short while ago. Mr. Rao has called a meeting of the Union cabinet tomorrow and will be submitting his resignation thereafter.

India: Scindia Interviewed; Rao's Leadership Viewed

BK0905120896 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0950 GMT 9 May 96

[Interview with former Congress-I leader Madhavrao Scindia by Doordarshan correspondent Rajdeep Sardesai in New Delhi on 9 May—recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Begin recording] [TV Anchorman Appan Menon] Rajdeep, what is the mood there? It is, I think, collapsing around your ears.

[Sardesai] Well Appan, I have been hearing for the last one hour about how you have been saying that various people are going to challenge Mr. Rao's leadership, but let me say it's not very easy to bring down a Congress president. It's not very easy at all, and at this moment at least, various Congress leaders in Delhi have actually closed ranks around Mr. Rao. That could, of course, change in the next couple of days and one person being mentioned in some quarters as a possible rallying point is Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, the expelled Congress leader. A short while ago, I spoke to Mr. Scindia for his first reaction on the Congress poll debacle.

Mr. Scindia, what is your immediate reaction to this poll verdict?

[Scindia] Well, I don't think there is an immediate reaction, because when one expects something all along for the last few months, then I wouldn't really term the reactions immediate. The writing was on the wall. It's just very unfortunate that the Congress high command could not read the writing on the wall.

[Sardesai] But given the fact that the Congress is now heading for possibly its worst performance ever, do you think that Mr. Narasimha Rao has not forfeited his right to be leader of the Congress?

[Scindia] Rajdeep, I think this is for the Congress party to decide. I said before that at least this massive debacle will set into motion a process of introspection, because if it doesn't, then all is lost. As far as Mr. Rao is concerned, really everyone has to probe one's own moral conscience and one should act according to it. I really can't answer that question. I know that I would have ... [Scindia pauses] I think any sensible person would have immediately put in his resignation, but I don't want to make any comments on what Mr. Rao should be doing or not.

[Sardesai] Do you think it will be now easier for you to bring what you have been talking about — bringing together all Congressmen, many of whom have left the fold, and bring them together in some form of a coalition without Mr. Rao at the helm? Do you think now that is a real possibility?

[Scindia] Again this is for the Congress to really decide. All we can do is pose these questions from outside, which I do hope become issues which Congressmen must take up. And quite rightly, Rajdeep, the chemistry is the same, the ideology is the same; I have no dispute with the party and my friends who I have affection for, who I have respect for, are also within the Congress party. My only point of dispute was the style of functioning, the arbitrary style of functioning of the Congress high command.

[Sardesai] But you will try now to ... [pauses], you will continue your efforts to try and bring together all Congressmen who, you said, were committed to the idea.

[Scindia] Well, certainly, all like-minded people; whether it's possible to bring together all Congressmen. This would be the ideal thing, but whether it's possible or not, so much depends again what the Congress wants to do also....

[Sardesai, interrupting] What sort of a government, because it's clear now we are heading for a coalition government? What sort of an arrangement would you push for and what sort of arrangement would you like to play a role in it?

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[Scindia] I would very much like to try and do my ... [pauses] make my little contribution toward pushing for a coalition government with a liberal democratic flavor....

[Sardesai, interrupting] What does that mean?

[Scindia] But what I would really ... [pauses] I think what we should be insisting upon, because coalition governments don't necessarily have to be unstable. They are unstable because in 1977- 79 and 1989-91, they got together disparate elements without any common ideology, without any common platform. Therefore, this government, before it is formed, must agree on a common agenda, a minimum agenda, a common platform, and a minimum common ideology, so that they are not there, they don't coalesce to grab power, they try and take power so as to translate an ideology or a program into ... [pauses], implement an ideology or a program.

[Sardesai] In practical terms, you are supporting that we have an NF-LF [National Front-Left Front] coalition with the Congress?

[Scindia]] This would look the most likely, but certainly, I think, maybe the leadership of Mr. Narasimha Rao may come in the way of some elements.

[Sardesai] And who for you would be the best person to lead such a coalition, in your view?

[Scindia] I think, this is much too early to really comment on such (?things).

[Sardesai] Any name, any names who you think could be possible?

[Scindia] There are lot of names going around, but I really don't think ... [pauses]. It's much too early to comment.

[Sardesai] And are you finally a candidate for prime minister to head such a coalition?

[Scindia] No, I am not a candidate for prime minister. That was not the object of the exercise, and I did stand for what I thought was a principle, and I do hope that it will be vindicated. My constituency has not yet begun counting. So I do hope the people vindicate my stand.

[Sardesai] Mr. Scindia, thank you very much.

[Scindia] Thank you.

[Sardesai] Well it's clear, Appan, from that interview that Mr. Scindia hopes to emerge as a rallying point but quite simply doesn't know how to go about it at this moment at least.

[Appan Menon] Yes, this is a brief question Rajdeep. We know, you say the party faithful are rallying around the leader, but people like Rajesh Pilot haven't come back yet. There are other centers of power. I think within the next 24 hours, don't you think people will set in motion this questioning of the leadership.

[Sardesai] Well, they will try but remember there have been numerous times when we have counted Narasimha Rao out and each time he has sprung back to surprise you; and I won't be surprised if in the next couple of days Narasimha Rao springs up another surprise. Don't count him out yet. That's the message really here from the Congress headquarters.

[Appan Menon] Rajdeep, you are talking, to just come back to what you were saying about Scindia being a possible rallying point, some other people who could have been rallying points have actually not been doing too well — Mr. Karunakaran has lost, Mr. Sharad Pawar is in Maharashtra, the Congress is doing badly. Do you think all of this is going to perhaps make things easier for someone like Mr. Scindia.

[Sardesai] But I think it is going to make things easier for Mr. Rao. Mr. Scindia, so long as he is charge-sheeted in the hawala [illegal money transfer] case, cannot really hope. Until his name is cleared in the hawala case, cannot really hope to emerge as a rallying point at this stage. No real name, in that sense, no real strong contenders to Mr. Rao's leadership have yet emerged; and the [word indistinct] factor, there is no alternative factor, still obtains, I am afraid, as far as the Congress is concerned, debacle or no debacle.

[Appan Menon] Okay, Rajdeep, Thank you very much. We will come back to you later in the evening.

India: BJP Leader Says Party Duty-Bound To Form Government

BK0905123996 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1130 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Lok Sabha results and trends clearly indicate that a hung parliament is in the offing. The Congress-I has suffered major reverses. The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] is likely to emerge as a single largest party, but short of a clear majority. The National Front-Left Front combine is heading toward improving its position in the Lok Sabha.

In the six states where assembly elections took place, the only survivors of the anti-establishment wave appear to be the Left Front in West Bengal and the Congress-I-AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] combine in Pondichery. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the anti-establishment mood is quite clear. In Haryana, the Ruling Congress-I is yielding to

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the Samata Party and other opposition parties, while in Assam it is yielding to the AGP [Aso Gana Parishad].

In Uttar Pradesh, early trends show the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Samajwadi Party are ahead of the Congress-I. In Bihar, the BJP-Samata Party combine seems to be gaining at the cost of the Janata Dal which is leading in 9 of the 16 seats trends for which are now available. The Congress-I-AIADMK, which won all the 39 seats from Tamil Nadu in the last elections is set to draw a blank this time suffering at the hands of DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam]- Tamil Maanila Congress alliance. The Lok Sabha results and trends indicate a loss of 101 seats for the Congress-I compared to the last elections. The BJP is gaining 12, Janata Dal 9, and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and CPI [Communist Party of India] 4 each. However, the regional parties are the major gainers. [passage omitted]

The BJP says it is duty-bound to form the government at the Center. The party general secretary, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, told newspersons in New Delhi today that after receiving a majority in its favor, it would explore all possibilities to form the government at the center. He said his party is already in touch with several regional parties to seek their support, but refused to name them. Mr. Mahajan said his party would never like to impose another election on the people.

The mood in the Congress-I headquarters is one of guarded caution. The party is trying to analyze the causes for its poor performance in the general elections. Ravi Ramakrishna spoke to senior party leader and Union Minister Pranab Mukherjee a short while ago.

[Begin recording] [Ramakrishna] Which direction you think is Indian National Congress heading?

[Mukherjee] Of course, the trend is not favorable to the Congress party. But Congress is a big old party and reverses are not new to it. In our long life, we had success and also we had defeats. And in parliamentary politics, it may happen. Therefore, we shall have to search the reasons and analyze it and take the corrective measures.

[Ramakrishna] The lack of charisma of the leadership is a cause for not mustering enough votes in this elections, do you support that view?

[Mukherjee] No, because charismatic leaders had lost elections, not once, twice. But I believe that we have not been able to communicate the message of the liberalized economic policies and economic reforms, and particularly the benefits which accrued to the common people. Unfortunately the languages and phraseologies which we used appeared to be some sort of elite conception. [end recording]

India: CPI-M Leader Jyoti Basu Comments on 'Third Alternative'

BK1005043196 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Left Front in West Bengal seems to be repeating its performance both in the parliamentary as well as the assembly elections. We go over now to P.C. Sur in Calcutta for the latest:

[Begin recording] [Sur] We are here at the Netaji Indoor Stadium in Calcutta, where the counting for the Calcutta northwest constituency is going on. You can feel that the tensions are mounting slowly. We have some results which have been declared officially, and so far 30 results have been declared and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist]-led Left Front is maintaining a steady lead. Out of 30, CPI-M has bagged 19, All India Forward Bloc three, RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] one, while Congress has bagged two seats, GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] three, Forward Bloc-Samajwadi one, and independent one. Little while ago, we have spoken to Mr. Jyoti Basu, the chief minister of West Bengal, regarding the emerging political trends.

After the elections, how do you foresee the political future of the country?

[Basu] We, we are all concerned about the political future of India because in the [words indistinct] center, there has to be a government. Now we are trying .... [pauses] We are against the Congress-I government; we are against the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. So we are trying for a third alternative. We have already had some understanding with a program for left parties with the Janata Dal and Samajwadi Party, but we have invited all those regional parties ....

[Sur, interrupting] If the situation demands that you have to choose between the two, like Congress or BJP, what would you do?

[Basu] We will not choose any. We will remain in the opposition and let any of those parties form a government.

[Sur] You have just now said about Left Front-National Front coalition. But in the past we have seen that this coalition did not last for long, and there were several leaders of different political opinions. How do you think that they will be able to provide a stable government?

[Basu] Well, we have been telling these leaders—and you know very well we have also worked with them earlier when they formed the governments twice in India—that they should learn lessons from what happened. They couldn't continue because, as you

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said, they have differences among themselves. But that should not happen, should not happen because in the interest of India. There is no other alternative, and I hope and trust they will understand this duty which they have to the people of India. [end recording]

India: Parties Begin Consultations on Forming Government

BK1005004496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 2335 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With the prospect of a hung parliament looming large, political parties have started consultations on the formation of a new government. With 230 Lok Sabha results announced so far, the Congress is leading with 81, closely followed by BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] with 71. The Janata Dal has secured 17. Regional parties and independents have bagged 51 seats.

The Janata Dal chief, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, has said that the National Front-Left Front [NFLF] combine will try to form the government with the help of its allies and others. Talking to newsmen in Patna, he rejected the possibility of the NFLF supporting a compromise candidate from the Congress for the prime ministership.

The former prime minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, said his proposal to the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] chief to return to the NFLF combine has evoked a positive response. In another move, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, called on Mr. Karunanidhi in Madras yesterday. According to a DMK party spokesman, the two leaders discussed the latest political developments.

CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] sources said they have initiated informal talks with regional parties for consolidating the third front. Mr. V.P. Singh called on the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The meeting lasted about 15 minutes. The Shiromani Akali Dal, which has won eight seats, said it will support a non-Congress government at the center.

The Indian National Congress says that a large section of its partymen are against staking claim to form the government. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said in New Delhi that the partymen want the Congress to sit in the opposition in a hung parliament. He clarified that the final decision will be taken by the party high command. Mr. Gadgil said the Congress will not have truck with the BJP.

India: Peaceful Voting in Kashmir Constituencies Seen as 'Triumph'

BK1005071696 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 9 May 96 p 8

[Editorial: "India's Triumph"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The peaceful culmination of the polling process in Jammu and Ladakh is a rebuff to the Pakistani propaganda questioning the validity of the elections in the State. The credit for the success goes to the voters, who even braved shelling by the Pakistani forces in the border areas while exercising their franchise. The heavy percentage of voting — over 55 percent in Jammu and about 80 per cent in Ladakh — in comparison to the rest of the country can be attributed to the people's eagerness to end the political uncertainty that dogs the State. This is not surprising as the people of these two regions have been suffering for no fault of theirs as militancy is more or less Valley specific. Yet, they have to pay an unnecessarily high price in terms of being denied the benefits of an elected government. This is despite the fact that even during the heyday of terrorism, it had no takers in these two regions, though terrorists have at times succeeded in exploding a bomb or two. The post-1989 insurgency brought into sharp focus the distinctiveness of the two areas which have little in common with the Valley except their contiguity and the fact that they were once part of the Dogra kingdom. Small wonder, the demand for bifurcating the State had been gaining ground in the two regions, more as an expression of the people's disgust with the cult of violence in the Valley than as a yearning for separate existence. Tuesday's elections provided the first opportunity for the two regions to assert their own identity and the people seem to have availed of it. It is a major setback for the All Party Hurriyat Conference, which called for a boycott of the polls and for Pakistan which has made Kashmir synonymous with the Valley. It is only reasonable to expect the National Conference to rue its decision not to take part in the polls which has only reinforced its alienation from the common people.

However encouraging the response to the elections in Jammu and Ladakh constituencies may be, the real test for the Government is in bringing the elections in Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantnag constituencies to a fruition. As in Jammu and Ladakh, the elections have evoked considerable enthusiasm in the Valley as can be inferred from the large number of contestants who have braved threats from the militants. If the Government is able to ensure adequate security and work out an effective system to enable the migrants to vote, the response in the Valley may not be any different from that in Jammu and Ladakh.

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India: Article Examines Parties' Views on Foreign Policy

BK1005072496 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 9 May 96 p 11

[Article by Shuba Singh: "Focus on Security Issues"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With the prospect of a hung Parliament looming ahead, the various political parties in the ruling combination would influence to some extent, the foreign policy of the new government. Though there is unlikely to be a major change in the country's foreign policy, there would be some reworking of priorities and in the management of foreign policy.

The main focus of attention for all political parties would be issues connected with India's security, whether it is linked to insurgent movements or defence procurement, or the nuclear and missile policy. It is with focus on security that the ties with Pakistan, the US and China will be linked.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) feels that defence procurement has been sadly neglected in recent years. And, all the political parties barring the Congress have taken a firm position against a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is not linked to global nuclear disarmament.

Both the BJP and the Left Front (LF) do not approve of the current state of relations with the US, hut on different grounds. According to the BJP, the US has shown a definite tilt towards Pakistan and has also strongly pushed its own international agenda on the nuclear non-proliferation issue (including the comprehensive test ban) both of which impinge on India's security. Therefore, ties with Washington would have to take these factors into account.

The Left parties are strongly against blind co-operation with the US on important issues in the name of strengthening ties. They are opposed to active cooperation on military matters, including joint exercises with the US, and would review military co-operation agreement, if they are in a position to influence foreign policy.

The old-time socialists in the National Front (NF) and the LF still swear by the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), despite the end of the Cold War. They advocate a more active role for India on issues that affect Third World countries.

Going by the past experience of non-Congress governments, the main priority has been the neighbourhood, on improving relations with India's neighbours, in stark contrast to the Congress Government's management of relations. The Janata Party Government in 1977 and the NF Government in 1989 made all efforts to improve bilateral ties with the neighbours.

This would remain a priority area with the BJP, the NF, as well as the LF with some variation. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI (M)] is against using India's bigger size to strike unequal agreements with its neighbours. But India's security would form a major factor in bilateral relations for all these political parties.

Bilateral relations with Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh are generally on an even keel and all political formations would continue to strengthen these ties. There is a change in attitude among political parties regarding the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) which is now seen by all of them as a viable Institution for greater regional co-operation.

All the political parties would like to make their own assessment on the state of affairs regarding relations with Pakistan. The BJP would take a hard line on ties with Pakistan, particularly on its support to militant activity across the border. The party would also take a strong view on the easy passage for militants across the border from Bangladesh and Myanmar [Burma].

The three contentious issues in India's foreign policy on which there were differences of opinion between the political parties in the past, were relations with China, South Africa and Israel. The issues, such as apartheid, peace efforts in West Asia and the stand- off with China, which had cut off ties with these countries, are over. This has resulted in vastly improving ties with each of them. All parties are largely in conformity with the thrust to improve relations with these countries.

New Delhi's neglect of some of the smaller developing countries and old friends of the past like Cuba, is something that the CPI (M) would want to rectify.

India: Congress Loses Kerala, Pondicherry; Near Defeat in 2 Others

BK1005100996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The emerging scenario in the elections to five states and one union territory shows that the Congress has been voted out of power in Kerala and Pondicherry, and is on the verge of defeat in Haryana and Assam. Another setback for the Congress is the rout of its alliance with the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam] in Tamil Nadu. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] led front is all set to retain its power in West Bengal.

In Kerala, the CPI-M led Left Democratic Front [LDF] which has won 80 out of the 140 seats in the state

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assembly is to discuss the formation of a new ministry in a three-day meeting of the party's state secretariat from 15th of this month. The LDF convener, Mr. M.M. Lawrence, told our Thiruvananthapuram correspondent that the CPI-M politburo is to meet in New Delhi tomorrow. It will also discuss the formation of a new ministry in Kerala. The ruling Congress led United Democratic Front could only win 59 seats and an Independent won the remaining seat.

In Tamil Nadu, it is a landslide victory for the DMK-TMC-CPI [Dravida Munetra Kazhagam-Tamil Maanila Congress-Communist Party of India] combine. The front has won 158 of the 164 seats results of which have been announced so far. The DMK won 124, the TMC 29, and the CPI five. The All India Forward Bloc got one, the AIADMK one, the PMK [Pattali Makkal Katchi] two, and the Janata Party, and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] one each. As reported the chief minister, Ms. Jayalalitha lost her Bargur seat.

The Pondicherry unit of the Indian National Congress says it will not stake its claim to form a government in the union territory though it is the single largest party. The PCC-I [Pradesh - State — Congress Committee-I] president, Mr. P. Shanmugam, told newsmen in Pondicherry this morning that his party will take up a role of the responsible opposition. The DMK-TMC-CPI alliance has so far secured 14 seats in the 30-member assembly.

In Assam, of the 84 results declared so far, the Asom Gana Parishad [AGP] led front has secured 48. The AGP's share is 38, the ASDC [Autonomous State Demand Committee] five, the CPI three, and the CPI-M two. The Congress-I won 24, the UNF [United National Front] one, and Independents and others seven. The state chief minister, Mr. Bhumidhar Barman, lost to the AGP candidate, Mr. Pulakesh Barua, by over 6,700 votes in the Barkhetri assembly constituency.

India: TV Reports Latest Tally; BJP, NF-LF 'Keen' To Assume Power

BK1005103296 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0845 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With a fractured verdict almost a certainty, parleys between various political parties and combinations for government formation have picked up. The prime minister, whose party suffered serious reversals, has summoned the meeting of the Union Cabinet this evening, following which Mr. Narasimha Rao will tender his resignation. Over half of the 537 results have been declared so far and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is making steady grounds to become the single largest party. The National Front-Left Front [NF-LF] combine is also claiming to form the largest group, but both will fall well short of the magic figure of 270. We take a look at the latest overall party position:

Total [results] declared and lead: 498; the BJP, 151; the Congress, 129; the Janata Dal, 32; CPI-M [Communist Party of India- Marxist], 30; TMC [Tamil Maanila Congress], 18; DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam], 16; Shiv Sena, 15; SP [Samajwadi Party], 14; BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party], 11; CPI [Communist Party of India], eight; Congress-T, three; Samata [Party], two; others 61.

Both the BJP and the NF-LF combine are keen to stake their respective claims to form a government. The Congress has in the meantime said it is willing to sit in the opposition. It has also ruled out any truck with the BJP in the formation of a new government.

The top brass of the BJP is holding parleys in the capital to explore the possibilities of forming a government. The party is in an upbeat mood and the leaders are confident that they will come out with a magic formula to come to power at the Center. The Central Parliamentary Board meeting began at 1100 today with leaders discussing various permutations and combinations to form a government. The BJP's serious effort to align with like-minded parties is on. They have already contacted the DMK-TMC alliance which swept the polls in Tamil Nadu.

The BJP leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said that if his party emerges as the largest party, it will claim the right to form the government. He said his party will fight it out if the National Front-Left Front combine formed the government along with the Congress at the Center. Mr. Vajpayee said that his party will not involve itself in any horse-trading to fulfill its ambitions of forming a government at the Center. He said besides the Samata Party and the Haryana Vikas Party, the BJP was enlisting the support of the Akali Dal and the other regional entities in the south.

The National Front-Left Front combine is working overtime to prevent the BJP from taking the seat of power in Delhi. It is planning an alliance with secular forces by initiating talks with various regional parties. Senior Janata Dal leaders, who are now in New Delhi, are exploring various options to form the government at the Center. A section of the party feels that the Congress support is essential for this purpose.

[Begin Janata Dal leader Ramakrishna Hegde recording; in progress] ...all secular forces, because the future of the country is at stake. The integrity and unity of the country is at stake if we do not combine all secular forces together. [end recording]

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More than the secular notions, the Congress party is placing its emphasis on the economic policy. The party feels it might consider supporting such a group which would continue its economic reforms.

[Begin Congress Spokesman Major Ved Prakash recording] NF-LF showed its performance in '89-'91. It is still fresh in the mind of the people. Now unless they come out with some constructive ideas... [pauses] You see it's very difficult to see that the progress of the country could take place without a proper economic reforms program suggested by them. As far as the program suggested by Congress party is concerned, it has started showing results. You have seen how much progress has taken place. So, if NF-LF comes with viable programs and Congress party is convinced that NF-LF is able to provide a government which will carry out the programs which were projected by Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, the Congress party can consider about it. [end recording]

The Janata Dal leader and Bihar chief minister, Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav, has said that there are enough candidates within the National Front and the Janata Dal who can take up the mantle of leadership at the Center in the event of the NF-LF combine forming the government. Mr. Yadav spoke to our correspondent Sudhanshu Ranjan on the issue:

[Begin recording] [Yadav in Hindi] The National-Left Front allies and the secular parties, the parties which are committed to social justice, will form the government.

[Ranjan in Hindi] Some leaders of your party have said that if the Congress party were to elect [Vice President] K.R. Narayanan as its leader, you would support him.

[Yadav] No, I did not say anything like.

[Ranjan] You did not say so.

[Yadav] No.

[Ranjan] That means, someone from within your alliance alone will be the prime minister.

[Yadav] Absolutely right. The prime minister will be from our own alliance. We will sit together with our allies and discuss it.

[Ranajan] Will that be you?

[Yadav] I am not saying that I will be the [prime minister]. Does anybody say that he alone will be the [prime minister]?

[Ranjan] What is your intention, after all?

[Yadav] Our intention is to form the government.

[Ranjan] Don't you wish to become the prime minister?

[Yadav] The desire may be there. Everybody nurses some desire, but the final decision will be made by the (?members of parliament). [end recording]

India: BJP Formally Stakes Claim To Form Government

BK1005120496 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1130 GMT 10 May 96

[From the "Special Election Bulletin"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has formally decided to stake its claim to form the government at the Center. The decision was taken at a meeting this afternoon of its parliamentary board and central officerbearers. Presided over by the party president, Mr L.K. Advani, it was attended, among others, by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. Emerging out of the two-hour-long meeting, senior party leaders said the response from the regional parties for their support has been very positive. They also disclosed that a BJP-led coalition government would be more desirable than support from the outside. The leaders said that Mr. Vajpayee is likely to call on the president tomorrow to stake the party's claim for the formation of a new government.

The Shiv Sena chief, Mr. Bal Thackeray, is of the view that the BJP must form the government at the Center in the event of a hung parliament. He told our correspondent in Mumbai [Bombay] that the Shiv Sena would fully support the BJP government. Mr. Thackeray said that he is not interested in having any post or portfolio but would play a constructive role toward formation of what he termed as a good government.

In a related development, several top leaders from the National Front-Left Front combine are also likely to call on the president for a similar claim. Several Janata Dal leaders have also expressed the same view. The Janata Dal leader, Mr. R.K. Hegde, said the president's invitation need not necessarily be on a first-come-first-served basis. Senior Janata Dal leaders are now in Delhi, exploring various options to form the government at the Center. A section of the party feels that Congress support is essential for this purpose. [passage omitted]

India: Commentary Blames Bhutto for 'Double Talk' on Ties With India

BK0905125696 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 9 May 96

[Commentary by S.N. Kaul Jalali]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto in her usual double talk on relations

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with India has recently stated that Kashmir problem could be solved in the spirit of Simla Agreement. However, she had again said to link the solution to the UN resolution on Kashmir. While adding this rider, she appears to have completely ignored the fact that the very first condition of this resolution of August 1948 that called for plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir stipulates that Pakistan should withdraw all its troops from the state. Pakistan has not fulfilled this condition even to this day. Meanwhile, the changes that have occurred both at international and local levels after the state acceded to India in 1947 have rendered the resolution obsolete. Also given the radical, ethnic, linguistic, and geographical diversities of the state, the concept of plebiscite have since lost its feasibility and practicability.

However, India has always been persistent for a dialogue with Pakistan on all issues, including Kashmir, without any precondition or third party intervention. India considers a continued dialogue essential for a long-term solution of outstanding problems between the two countries. It also feels that differences on any such outstanding issue should not stand in the way of normalization of relations between the two countries as any such difference could be removed through a continued dialogue. Such an approach has been applied on a wider scale throughout the world. It has been tried successfully in Indo-Chinese relations, and has been adopted by China and Russia last month for finalization of Shanghai Treaty regarding Sino-Russian and Sino-Central Asian relations and border problems.

Talks between India and Pakistan got stalled after the seventh round of foreign secretary-level talks between the two countries in January 1994. Soon after these talks, India sent to Pakistan six proposals called nonpapers in diplomatic language. Among other issues, these pertain to conversion of the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir to a line of peace and tranquility, extension of agreement on nonaggression against each other's nuclear facilities, the civilian population and economic targets, and resolution of Siachen and Sir Creek issues. In between, Pakistan has continued its strenuous efforts at internationalizing the Kashmir problem. It made a determined bid to raise it at the United Nations in 1994 and has repeatedly attempted to rake it up at the UN Human Rights Commission's sessions in Geneva, and at other international fora.

It has always failed in its efforts and on the contrary only got exposed for its abetment of support to militancy in Kashmir. This approach of Pakistan has also led to deterioration in relations between the two countries. On the one hand, Ms. Benazir Bhutto seeks to improve relations between the two countries through settlement of Kashmir problem by a dialogue, but on the other hand it continues to lend support to militancy in Kashmir and as a habit always rakes up the problem at international fora. This double talk smacks of immorality and Ms. Benazir Bhutto has to realize that only a purposeful response, coupled with diplomatic initiatives to step-by-step approach advocated by India can bring back the relations between the two countries on a normal keel and ultimately lead to a resolution of all outstanding problems between the two countries.

Public opinion in Pakistan itself favors a purposeful dialogue between the two countries. The leader of opposition in Pakistan, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, has already lent his support to Ms. Benazir Bhutto to improve relations with India. Just to quote another example, the prestigious Pakistan English daily, DAWN, commented in an article on the 29 September last year that negotiations to resolve disputes and to reduce the level of militarization will be in the interest of both the countries. It supported the offer of dialogue made by the external affairs minister of India. In the background of positive Indian approach and favorable public opinion at home, Ms. Benazir Bhutto has to realize that a purposeful dialogue supported by diplomatic initiative can be hardly inimical to vital interests of Pakistan.

Iran

Iran: Article Supports Khamene'i's Remarks to Writers Conference

LD0905140296 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 5 May 96 p 2

[Article by Mohammad Javad Hojjati-Kermani: "Writers and the Leader of Writers]

[FBIS Translated Text] Thursday's [2 May] meeting between the country's "penmen" and the leader of the revolution [Khamene'i] — who is himself a writer and the leader of writers — could be regarded as a turning point in the views and method of approach of "penmen" to the revolution and the leader of the revolution and the country's fundamental issues.

To review the various aspects of the meeting and also the important points in the remarks of the leader of the revolution requires more time and, in this short opportunity, I will refer to only one point. That is the friendly, kind, and informal way in which the leader of the revolution met with the "penmen", which was shown in the manner and quality of the meeting as well as in the connotations of the remarks made by the leader of the revolution. In my opinion, everyone in the audience had the same impression. Yours truly has always wished that such friendly meetings, in such a congenial and

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like-minded atmosphere, would be held again and again — formally and informally — and that writers would get to know the lovable and attractive character and mannerisms of the leader of the revolution from close quarters and benefit more and more from his guidance and instructions.

In the view of this writer, the tone of the leader's speech testified to his eminence's empathy and esprit de corps with writers. He spoke very informally, calmly, firmly, and logically. Thus an opportunity has arisen for everyone, including "alternative thinkers", to review their, possibly incorrect and instinctive, stands. It is an invitation to be wise, to preach the good word, and to resort to words rather than violence, which is endorsed by the Koran. In my opinion the leader's remarks were instructive and informative for all penmen, politicians, and revolutionaries; for fervent, and even fanatical, supporters and as well as critics, moderates, and finally dissidents and alternative-thinkers.

However, the lesson it has for the first group is that it is an invitation to the right path, to refrain from deviant thoughts and deviant deeds. One should speak calmly and logically, instill ideas and wisdom in others and encourage them to think, pause, be introspective and self-critical, without getting excited, nervous, or angry. What better way than that? It is better for us to encourage dissidents and alternative thinkers to pause and think and that they, themselves, should become aware of their own mistake. Of course, that method of learning and introspection are very necessary for us to correct our mistakes.

Also, there is an obvious lesson to be learned by the alternative thinkers from that method of approach and manner of speech. By paying close attention to and by reading and listening to the speech again they could note the indubitable facts that are inherent in the speech and henceforth use their pens for conveying facts and supporting realities.

I should also add that none of us is absolutely right and therefore those writers who, sincerely, clearly, sympathetically, and dutifully write about and emphasize shortcomings, errors, and mistakes — even if they are what we call alternative thinkers or dissidents — are, consciously or unconsciously, in the service of the revolution. For, by making us aware of our shortcomings, errors, and mistakes, those writers do great service to the serious, sincere, and sympathetic supporters of the revolution. Therefore, we should preserve healthy and constructive criticism; not call anyone who thinks differently or points out our faults and shortcomings a dissident or an alternative thinker; not go on making "our own" circle tighter, and not fan the flames of disagreements, duality, and division.

May God be with and give help to all who travel on the path of righteousness. God willing.

Iran: Khamene'i's Exhortations to Press Praised

NC0905194896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 May 96 pp 1, 16

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

The remarks by the great leader of the revolution [Khamene'i] to a press gathering embodied some basic and serious points that should be reviewed intensively.

The first point was his recommendation to announcers and writers who interact with the public and who naturally project their own ideas to their audiences. The great leader advised them to present objective and tangible facts in an attractive manner and to depict the future and its brilliant horizons facing the people and society as they really are. They should not misrepresent the luminous horizons of the revolution and system to the eyes of the people as being dark and gloomy.

Another highlight of the great leader of the revolution's exhortations addressed to the country's journalistic community was his praise for the extensive and effective efforts of the government and the president himself, and his emphasis on plain and informal living as exemplified by the president.

These recommendations by the great leader in fact provide guidance for all the revolutionary forces and the true followers of the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult] and drives home the objective reality that it is not in the interest of the revolution, system, and country if aspersions are cast on the ceaseless efforts of Iran's executive branch to promote construction.

In such circumstances, innuendoes or the biased approaches of some individuals and organizations—aimed at depicting their efforts as unimportant in this stage of the country's construction and at downplaying the motivation of the people and the executive branch— cannot logically be considered revolutionary behavior or be justified under any circumstances.

Today, with the blessings of the work and steadfastness of the people during the period of holy defense [Iran-Iraq war] and in the country's reconstruction period, bright perspectives of the growth and exaltation of Islam, the revolution, and the country have been revealed to the people. So those who wish to conjure up the

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specter of an uncertain future before the eyes of the people with their barbs and irresponsible behavior—even if this blunder is committed with good motives—will certainly harm the people, as they will sow the seeds of pessimism and suspicion in their hopeful hearts.

Today, our question is: Who stands to benefit from such an unfortunate state of affairs? Those who have experienced the difficult and formidable phases of construction, of organizing the forces and the administrative complexities to resolve the daily-increasing problems of work and construction, are able to understand them better and can bear witness that the immature approach of casting aspersions on those who are making an effort can cause immense harm to the country's reconstruction trend.

It is not in the interest of Islam, the revolution, or the country for such unethical people to stir up the atmosphere with their propaganda. If until yesterday, people viewed such remarks as a propaganda campaign geared to the election, today with the conclusion of the elections, such an incorrect interpretation cuts no ice. These allegations can therefore be construed as "counter propaganda" that will certainly harm those who make them.

Today, Islamic Iran—considering its coterie of sworn enemies—is not in a position to tolerate any discord among the people; this cannot benefit its system. It is essential for all sectors of the people to follow the enlightened guidance of the leader and to strive to provide strength and true support for those who are working for and serving the country.

Iran: Qom Seminary Students Back Khamene'i, Condemn Liberalism

LD0905164896 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 5 May 96 p 2

[Report by RESALAT correspondent in Qom: "Qom Seminary Students March To Condemn Liberalism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Seminary students, accompanied by their teachers and various strata of the Hezbollahi people, staged a rally in this city yesterday to condemn liberalism and those trying to promote the decadent Western culture. The participants declared their support for the recent remarks made by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, in which he condemned liberalism. They also reiterated their readiness to guard the undisputed values and principles of the Islamic revolution.

According to a report by our correspondent, the participants issued a resolution at the end of the rally. The resolution calls on the seminarians and ulema to inform the Islamic community about the danger of adopting the alien culture, particularly the thoughts and ideas of liberalism. The resolution also asks the ulema to take action and prevent the novices and unskilled individuals in the seminary from expressing an opinion on certain Islamic principles and values, about which they are not fully informed. The resolution concludes that the ulema should no longer leave the arena open to those who have shown a desire for the decadent culture of the West.

Iran: Khamene'i Reappoints Council of Friday Prayer Leaders

LD0905174296 Tehran IRNA in English 1653 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 9, IRNA — The leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, on Thursday [9 May] reinstated the policy-making council of leaders of Friday congregational prayers nationwide upon expiry of their three-year tenure. Among their other duties, the council is responsible for drawing up the general topics of congregational sermons on Fridays.

Members of the council are: Seyyed 'Abbas Khatam, Seyyed Hashem Rasuli, Hasan Sane'i, Esma'il Ferdowsipur, Seyyed Reza Taqavi, Seyyed 'Ali Qazi'Asgar, 'Abdol-Hoseyn Mo'ezzi, Seyyed Mohammad Madani and Seyyed 'Ali Shah-Cheraghi. Upon an edict the leader of the revolution has also appointed Rasuli Mahallati head of the council in charge of their adminstrative affairs.

In his edict Thursday, Ayatollah Khamene'i also wished the council success in their future undertakings.

Iran: Article Stresses Vigilance Against Antirevolution Forces

LD0905183596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 6 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed Article: "Distortion and Opportunism"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The statements made by the leader of the revolution at a gathering of journalists were so explicit, clear, and simple that they needed no interpretation or explanation. But it seems that that are some who, knowingly or unknowingly, are interpreting the statements arbitrarily in such a way as to be totally contradictory to the leader's intentions and to be a distortion.

The exalted leader of the revolution chided those unhealthy elements who, under the previous regime, would not utter a sound and were even feeding at Savak's trough and he asked how it was that they now have become more revolutionary than the revolutionaries, and

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speak of a lack of freedom. The leader of the revolution referred to those who have no affinity with Islam, the revolution, the ruling system, and the people as "untrustworthy elements." In the course of his statements he welcomed the formation of an association of journalists. But now it seems that there are behind the scenes developments and some are intent on distorting real and tangible realities. That is why it is urgent that all the sincere and revolutionary forces have a sense of responsibility and bear in mind the following in a responsible manner:

First, it is a serious and unacceptable distortion when in his column in ETTELA'AT, Mr. Hojjati-Kermani interprets the explicit statements of the leader thus: "Even those who think differently and in our eyes oppose us, knowingly or unknowingly, serve the revolution since they make us aware of our shortcomings, deficiencies, and mistakes through their writings. That is a great service which they render to the serious and true supporters of the revolution."

It is regrettable that Mr. Hojjati distorts the straightforward statements of the leader in that manner. That is why the leader has described this pen-wielding stratum as "untrustworthy." Nonetheless, Mr. Hojjati believes them to be "servants of the revolution," who are engaged in a large service to the serious, true, and caring supporters of the revolution, and are making the forces of revolution aware of their own mistake. [passage omitted]

Those who are well-acquainted with the leader's characteristics know only too well that even the exalted leader of the revolution strongly shuns such sickening sycophantics. Of course Mr. Hojjati goes even further in his subsequent sentences and believes that the community of those with alternative ideas is at this moment serving the revolution with sincerity and care and, of course, unbeknownst to themselves, are penning the weak points, mistakes, and abuses of the serious, true, and caring supporters of the revolution. [passage omitted]

Second, parallel to Mr. Hojjati's note, there is another recent move which is even more dangerous than distortions. That is, the change of color of the infamous writers' union from the era of the taghut. This also is another dangerous distortion which one cannot and must not avoid.

One of the characteristics of these unhealthy and opportunist groups is that they adapt themselves to the conditions of the day no matter what the change. They are making hay while the sun shines. Today, the same group of writers — who benefitted from Farah's office and the blessings of the his holy majesty (!) — suddenly feel as if they have found the opportunity to show themselves and are able to re-establish their unhealthy, corrupt, and untrustworthy syndicate under the cover of a new name. This same infamous group was ready several times to do just this but was thwarted as a result of the vigilance of others and retreated.

Of course it must not be forgotten that this corrupt and infamous group has even penetrated some of the media and the press and is trying to exploit these propaganda leverages to achieve its unhealthy objectives. But the forces of the revolution will not allow the civilian soldiers of the Shah's tyrannical system to rally their forces and form their ranks on the cultural front, hide themselves behind revolutionary personalities, and damage the culture of the revolution and the community in an organized manner.

Of course the group is not large enough to even merit a second glance, but we must not forget that they are most impudent and are always ready to take advantage of any opportunity. Perhaps they do not realize that the revolutionary forces in the arena of the press and of the written word will not allow — under any circumstances — deviant and unhealthy elements to attack the foundations of the revolutionary ethos by hiding behind a new mask, even if they change their color.

Iran: Governor of East Azerbaijan Province Visits Istanbul

NC0905185796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The governor of East Azerbaijan Province arrived in Istanbul at the invitation of the mayor of Istanbul today. He held talks with the mayor on trade activities and the exchange of technical information between Turkish industrialists and their counterparts in East Azerbaijan.

Iran: Cuban Official Thanks Iran for Support Against U.S.

LD0905194696 Tehran IRIB Television Third Program Network in English 1815 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran's Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati says America's enmity with independent and free nations is due to Washington's imperialistic nature.

In a meeting with the Cuban President's Office director, Mr. Wilfredo Lopez, in Tehran today, Mr. Velayati also said: Bilateral ties are at a satisfactory level and both Havana and Tehran have attained promising successes in various fields including agriculture.

The Iranian foreign minister later hoped that Irano-Cuban collaboration could expand in future.

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For his part, the Cuban official thanked Iran for its support of Cuba in its struggle against imperialist United States of America.

Iran: Kharrazi Presents Report on Iraqi Cease-Fire Violations

LD0905210196 Tehran IRNA in English 2028 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, 9 May (IRNA) — Iran's Permanent Representative at the United Nations Dr Kamal Kharrazi here today delivered a report to the U.N. secretary general on Iraq's violations of the terms of a ceasefire with Iran from June 1, 1995.

The instances cited by the Iranian envoy to the United Nations include violations of Iranian airspace, and land and water territories, involving also unprovoked shootings and unwarranted engineering operations.

According to the report, counter-revolution elements also twice jumped the border to Iran but were pushed back by Iranian forces on the Iranian side of the border with Iraq.

Dr Kharrazi said in his report to the secretary general that on August 1, 1995 a group of Iranian counter-revolutionaries jumped the Iraqi border to Iran and marched on to three Iranian border villages, extorting money from their inhabitants under threat of death and fleeing back to the Iraqi side of the border shortly after.

The letter of the Iranian envoy was circulated as a document of the Security Council Thursday.

On 17 July, 1988 Iran accepted U.N. Security Council resolution no. 598 that committed both neighboring countries to the terms of a ceasefire which has sadly been frequently violated by Iraq in the meantime.

Iraq has also torpedoed full implementation of the ceasefire agreement and brought it to a stalemate by refusing to release thousands of Iranian prisoners of war now on Iraqi soil.

Iran: Syria's al-Zu'bi, Housing Minister Agree on Reconstruction of Lebanon

LD0905214596 Tehran IRNA in English 2107 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, 9 May (IRNA) — Housing and Urban Development Minister 'Abbas Ahmad-Akhundi and Syrian Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi in a meeting here on Thursday [9 May] underlined joint cooperation between Iran and Syria for the reconstruction of areas in Lebanon, which were devastated as a result of the zionists' aggression on Lebanon.

The two sides at the meeting exchanged views on expansion and strengthening of Tehran-Damascus ties and the upcoming visit to Iran of al-Zu'bi.

Meanwhile, Syrian Economy Minister Muhammad al-'Imadi is to pay an official visit to Tehran next week in order to arrange the preliminaries for the visit to Tehran of al-Zu'bi.

Joint economic cooperation committees are expected to be formed in the aftermath of al-'Imadi's visit to Tehran.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Former Prime Minister Elected Head of Nepalese Congress Party

OW1005021596 Tokyo KYODO in English 0047 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, May 10 KYODO — Former Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala was elected Thursday [9 May] head of the Nepali Congress Party (NCP), the leading force in the current ruling coalition.

Koirala, 71, elected to the top post at the party's ninth general convention, takes over party presidency from Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, who has served as head of the party since 1991.

Bhattarai did not seek reelection this time, party officials said.

Koirala received 1,144 votes against the 254 votes of his nearest rival Chiranjibi Wagle in the elections in which some 1,411 representatives voted.

The NCP, Nepal's oldest political party, has 73 seats in the 205- member parliament and is currently the dominant partner of the kingdom's three-party coalition government headed by Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba.

One of three top leaders of the NCP, Koirala was the party's general secretary until he became prime minister of Nepal in 1991.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Official Says Pakistan Must Expand Relations With Kabul

LD0905172696 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan must expand its relations with Kabul administration. This point was made during an interview with Pakistan's press by General

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Hamid Gol, former head of Pakistan's military intelligence service. He added: It was good news to hear that a delegation from Kabul had arrived in Pakistan. Pakistan must restore its relations with Kabul in a friendly atmosphere.

In order to find a solution to the issue of Afghanistan, all relevant groups must join together in the true sense of the words so that the Afghans can have an elected, Islamic and independent government in their country.

Pakistan: Editorial Hails 'Significant Thaw' in Afghan Ties

BK1005050696 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 9 May 96 p 6

[Editorial: "A Significant Thaw"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Pak-Afghan talks at Islamabad signal a significant thaw in ties between the two countries, particularly when Kabul has tendered an apology for the ransacking and torching of Pakistan embassy building in September last and has also agreed "in principle" to pay compensation. The development has been billed as a first step towards resumption of full-fledged diplomatic relations between the two neighbors. The talks, which represent the first direct official contact between the Rabbani regime and Islamabad in eight months, also focused on the general situation in Afghanistan, the bilateral relations and on various projects relating to the opening of trade routes between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has voiced Islamabad's concern over persisting instability in Afghanistan and urged all Afghan leaders to work for a negotiated political settlement of the conflict. He has also offered Pakistan's mediatory help in effecting a reconciliation.

The Kabul-Islamabad talks have laid out a broad framework for resumption of fruitful diplomatic relations between the two countries. Straddling across the sole land route to the newly independent Central Asian republics, Afghanistan has assumed an added geo-political significance for Islamabad since the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the emergence of new Central Asian markets. A major irritant in the Pak-Afghan relations has been the Taleban phenomenon, perceived by the Rabbani government to have been cobbled together by Islamabad. The spectacular successes initially achieved by the student militia turned it into a formidable contender in the Afghan power struggle.

However, the capture of Herat by the Taleban proved a spoiler and clouded Islamabad's ties with Tehran which perceived it as an encroachment on its turf. In fact the reason why peace has eluded the beleaguered country for so long is the involvement of regional players in the internecine war. New Delhi has since openly jumped into the fray with "technical" assistance for the Rabbani air force while Russia too perceives a stake of its own in the imbroglio. Being partisan and divisive in nature, the Indo-Russian involvement only further deepened instability and wrecked chances of a negotiated settlement. The torching of the Pakistan embassy in Kabul too was perceived by some commentators as a result of the Indo-Russian meddling. However, the flaws in our Afghan policy cannot be glossed over: at times its sheer ineptness has been rather too palpable. The renewed US interest in Afghanistan, as reflected in the recent visits of two Clinton administration heavyweights to the region, could have galvanized the two sides to work for a rapprochement. Anyway, it is an auspicious breakthrough which needs to be pursued to its logical conclusion.

Pakistan: Afghanistan Welcomes Offer of Help in Reconstruction

BK1005075796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Afghanistan has welcomed Pakistan's desire to participate in its reconstruction and improvement of infrastructure. This was conveyed by the Afghan delegation led by the transport minister, Mr. 'Abdol Ghaffar, which recently visited Pakistan. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad last evening that the Afghan delegates have taken back ideas for the building of roads and rail links, as well as gas pipeline to Kabul, and promised to come back to Islamabad with their response.

Answering questions, the spokesman said Afghan Government has agreed in principle to compensate Pakistan for the human and material losses to the embassy and staff in Kabul and provide temporary accommodation for embassy and staff residences [as heard]. He said the government is considering the offer of temporary accommodation.

Pakistan: Spokesman Comments on Indian Election Outcome

BK0905145096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has expressed the hope that whichever party comes to power in India would address the core issues, including Kashmir, which are bedeviling relations between the two countries. A Foreign Office spokesman, when asked to comment on the trend of elections in India, said it was an internal affair of that country. However, we expect that whosoever will be at the helm of affairs, they will

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make a clear-cut move to resolve the problems affecting adversely Pakistan's relations with India. Pakistan has been unhappy about the rhetorics and anti-Muslim trends used in the election campaign. It has equally been sensitive to threats posed to our security by the Indian plans to explode a nuclear device for the second time and development and testing of missiles, which leave no warning time for Pakistan and can carry nuclear warheads.

About the sham elections in Jammu and Ladakh in occupied Kashmir, he pointed out that the polling turnout has been given higher than the entire percentage of voting in India itself and said these figures will be looked with skepticism. He pointed out that the true representatives of Kashmiri people, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference and even pro-India National Conference of Dr. Farooq Abdullah have boycotted the elections. He pointed out that the candidates in the elections are unknown entities and no impartial observers, even the International Committee of the Red Cross, have been allowed to monitor them. If India forces these elections in occupied Kashmir, these would be farcical. He referred to the UN Security Council Resolution 122 of 1957, which clearly states that elections are no substitute to a plebiscite. The spokesman said Indian Government arranged sham elections in Jammu and Ladakh first, as these were relatively easy, and elections on four other seats in occupied Kashmir have been delayed to deploy extra troops to force the elections — a desperate exercise.

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Predicts 'Tangible Development' on Kashmir

BK1005103596 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 10 May 96 p 4

[APP report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kotli — The Foreign Minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has predicted that in the wake of general elections in the India and USA some tangible development is possible on the Kashmir issue.

Addressing the Kotli Bar on Wednesday [8 May] night, Asif said that Pakistan had inter-linked the nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia with resolution of the Kashmir dispute. He said the next US administration would have one-point agenda, nuclear non-proliferation in the region, therefore, the US would address the Kashmir question to achieve the nuclear-free South Asia.

"We have told the world in categorical terms that the security of the region in particular and the world in general is at stake till the Kashmir dispute continues. The conflict over Kashmir will not remain restricted to the Subcontinent but will proliferate to threat the world peace," he warned. "This policy stand sent strong signals to the major players of the global politics. The peace in the region rests not on nuclear non-proliferation or the missile regimes but only with solution to the Kashmir issues."

He said that India could not linger on the Kashmir issue as the world community had started taking notice of the Indian repression and her legitimacy over Kashmir.

Pakistan: Foreign Office Spokesman Comments on Afghanistan, India

BK1005081696 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 10 May 96 p 1

[Report by Islamabad Bureau]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Afghanistan has offered to provide temporary accommodation for Pakistan's embassy and residences of its staff in Kabul.

A foreign office spokesman told a press briefing Thursday [10 May] that Afghan delegation led by the transport minister 'Abdol Ghaffar Sayem had conveyed the offer which was being considered by Pakistan. The offer was conveyed during official talks between six-member Afghan government delegation led by the transport minister and Pakistan officials led by Foreign Minister Sardar Asif he added.

Kabul has accepted Pakistan's claim for compensation for attack on its embassy on September 6 last year resulted killing of one employee of the embassy and injuring 27 others. Kabul has also agreed to rebuild the embassy burnt by the mob. When asked about recognising President Borhanoddin Rabbani regime in Kabul the spokesman said "we recognise Rabbani regime as de facto government in Kabul and are dealing with the Kabul regime in the same way as we are dealing with other Afghan groups".

Pakistan welcomed Kabul regime's interest in proposals to establish road and railways network to link Afghanistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan and Tajikistan with Pakistan he said. "This is a positive development" he said adding Kabul had promised to give positive response to the idea of laying a gas pipeline to Kabul.

Afghanistan also welcomed Pakistan's desire to participate in the reconstruction and improvement of infrastructure in the war-ravaged country, the spokesman went on saying.

Indian polls: Terming recently held elections in India as their internal affair, the spokesman said that Pakistan hoped that the new Indian government would resolve the core issues including Kashmir. "We hope a clear-cut move would be made to resolve problems affecting

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adversely Pak's relation with New Delhi," he said adding Pakistan was unhappy on anti-Muslim trend and threats of exploding nuclear device for second time and testing-firing of missiles during Indian electioneering. About sham polls in Jammu, Laddakh and occupied Kashmir he said that polling turnout has been described higher than entire voting percentage.

The spokesman said that contesting candidates were unknown entities and impartial observers even ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] were not allowed to monitor polls in occupied Kashmir which were rejected by All Parties Hurriyat Conference and even pro-Indian National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah.

He said that UN security council resolutions clearly stated that elections were no substitute to a plebiscite. He said extra troops were deployed in occupied Kashmir to hold the so-called elections.

ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] summit: The spokesman maintained that President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari would lead Pak delegation to the two day ECO summit beginning in Turkmenistan capital Ashgabat next Tuesday.

Pakistan: Bhutto Addresses Swedish Business Club; Accords Signed

BK0905160296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said modern, democratic, and liberal government has embarked upon a massive development program in the country. Addressing the Swedish Business Club at luncheon in Stockholm today, she said Pakistan is becoming an integral part of the larger global economy with private sector playing an important role. Her government has liberalized the economy and expanded the scope of partnership with foreigners on mutually advantageous terms. Sectors like telecommunications, power, energy, ports, shipping, railways, highways, and airlines are now open for local and foreign investors. All restrictions on transfer of principals, dividends, and capital gains against shares of foreign investors and foreign exchange have been removed. Besides creating a market-oriented environment, the Pakistan Government provides guarantee of protection to foreign investment. In the last two years, Pakistan received pledges of investment of over 20 billion rupees and $2.1 billion were invested directly by foreign investors. The prime minister said her longest lasting elected government since 1985 is supported by the people due to its agenda for change toward the better. Pakistan, she said, is a voice of moderation in the world. It has actively worked to root out international terrorism and has extradited terrorists. It has brought back peace to its port city of Karachi. Pakistan is a country of great economic potential for foreign investors. It stands at the crossroads to the Gulf, Central Asia, and East Asia and enjoys good relations with all these countries and believes in global trade and investment.

Radio Pakistan's special representative Bakhshish Ahmad reports from Stockholm that several agreements have been signed during the prime minister's visit. These include an $80-million contract for installation of 36,000 rural telecommunication lines in Azad Kashmir, a contract for supply of electric fans worth $6 million to Sweden and Europe in the private sector, and another agreement with a Swedish firm to market Mashshaq [trainer] aircraft manufactured in Pakistan to Thailand, Indonesia, and Uganda. In addition, two MOU's [memorandum of understanding] have been signed for the construction of hydroelectric power project at a cost of $70 million and a $500-million radar system. The system will assist the government in anti narcotics measures and also in environment-related projects. A Pakistan-Swedish business forum has been set up to explore ways and means for increasing trade between the two countries.

The prime minister visited this morning in Stockholm the head office of Ericsson, a world leading firm of advanced telecommunication systems. She was briefed by the chief executive of the firm regarding its operations.

Pakistan: Foreign Agents Blamed for Bomb Attacks

BK1005064796 Islamabad AL-AKHBAR in Urdu 9 May 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Azeem Siddiqi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Antiterrorist agencies and agencies monitoring the situation along the borders have informed the government about the infiltration of Indian saboteurs into Pakistan. According to very reliable sources, after achieving their objectives in Karachi, three foreign secret agencies — Israel's Mosad, India's RAW [Research and Analysis Wing] and Afghanistan's RAM [expansion unknown] — plan to disrupt internal peace and order in Pakistan.

According to the plan, three to four dozen experts and highly-trained agents from RAW and RAM have been sent to Pakistan. These agents have been given complete training in Pakistan's three major languages of Pushto, Punjabi, and Urdu. They have entered Pakistani territory from Rajasthan into Sindh, Sialkot into Punjab, and Chakothi into Azad Kashmir. Reports of infiltration by some agents through Bajaur along the Pakistani-Afghan border in the Northwest Frontier Province have also been confirmed.

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The leader of these agents has opened an account at a multinational bank in Pakistan. The agents have been asked to live in typical Pakistani style in Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, and three other cities. They have hired scores of disgruntled Pakistani youth.

The bomb blasts on buses are planned by the foreign agents while Pakistani subagents are provided cars and mobile phones to execute these plans. Mobile phones were recovered from the six agents arrested in Lahore last Monday. These agents made shocking disclosures about their network. Three more people have been arrested based on information gathered from these agents, who were arrested at a foreign exchange agency in Lahore. They confessed to carrying out bomb attacks against the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust Hospital [SKMTH] and a bus in Pattoki. Among these nine people, two are Hindus while the rest are Muslims of Indian, Pakistani, and Afghan nationality. During the investigation by a joint team, these saboteurs disclosed the location of their bases. The security agencies then raided these bases and seized important documents. Their disclosures about their entry, training, and contacts are being kept confidential for security reasons.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry is giving serious consideration to banning mobile phones and pagers in Lahore, Sialkot, and other cities within 20-40 km of the Indian border. According to very reliable government sources, a decision was made in the past to ban mobile phones in Lahore — as in Karachi — but the decision could not be implemented due to pressure from influential people. The Interior Ministry is reconsidering the decision in view of the bomb blasts at the SKMTH and in Pattuki and Shiekhupura. It has been learned that the Punjab Government has been asked to come up with some proposals. Implementation of the decision is expected after approval from the prime minister upon her return from Sweden.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Minister Comments on Efforts To Resolve Ethnic Conflict

BK0905122196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sri Lanka's appeal to the international community to crack down on the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] has received an overwhelming response. Justice Minister Professor G.L. Peiris said that several countries have begun detaining Tiger supporters. He pointed out that the Swiss Government is one to the latest addition to the rank of nations cooperating with Sri Lanka. The minister was informed of this by a Swiss parliamentary delegation in Colombo yesterday. He attributed the government's international reliability to its respect for human rights and the rule of law for this development. Therefore, unlike its predecessors, the People's Alliance administration has been able to secure the support of foreign governments in its efforts to resolve the ethnic conflict.

Professor Peiris was speaking at a ceremony organized in honor of employees of the Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation who completed 25 years of service. The ceremony was held in Colombo yesterday. The minister said that the government would make every effort to ensure that the ethnic conflict was resolved equitably. He commended Sri Lanka's trade union movement for its support to achieve this end. Professor Peiris observed that the Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation has had popularized the concept of insurance by designing various policies for people in rural areas.

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